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Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-95-096 *18 May 1995*

CONTENTS

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INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 18 May 1

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Ministry Denies Secret Nuclear Deal With Iran *[INTERFAX]* 2
Iran Deal Pending Until Gore-Chernomyrdin Talks *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 18 May]* 2
Official on Cancellation of Centrifuge Sale *[Moscow Radio]* 3
Clinton Visit to Kiev, NATO Expansion Assessed *[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 14-21 May]* 3
Deputy Defense Minister Quoted on NATO Expansion *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 17 May]* 4
Foreign Minister Comments on NATO Issue *[INTERFAX]* 4
Kozyrev Favors 'Energetic' Foreign Policy *[INTERFAX]* 5
Kozyrev on Settlement of Karabakh Conflict *[INTERFAX]* 5
Kozyrev Quoted on Use of Caspian Sea Resources *[INTERFAX]* 5
Foreign Ministry Statement on Ex-Yugoslavia *[ITAR-TASS]* 6
Grachev Notes PRC Desire To Establish Closer Ties *[Moscow RTV]* 6
Grachev Cited on Talks With PRC Leaders, Visit *[Moscow International]* 6
President of Turkmenistan in Moscow for Summit 7
Foreign Ministers Meet Before Summit *[Moscow ORT]* 7
Commentary Views Ties, Differences *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 18 May]* 7
Niyazov Arrives, Meets Chernomyrdin *[Moscow RTV]* 8
Meets With Yeltsin 18 May *[ITAR-TASS]* 8
Yeltsin: Niyazov's Visit 'Breakthrough' *[ITAR-TASS]* 9
Yeltsin, Niyazov Discuss Caspian Sea *[ITAR-TASS]* 9
Presidents Discuss Tajik Settlement *[ITAR-TASS]* 9
Yeltsin, Niyazov Sign Documents *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Yeltsin Said To Adopt Tougher Stance on Ukraine *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 18 May]* 10
Hardening Toward Kiev Seen Delaying Yeltsin Visit *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 18 May]* 11
Yeltsin Sees Improvement in Ties With Estonia *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Joint Bulgarian Commission Signs Protocol *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
Chernomyrdin Leaves for Two-Day Visit to Bulgaria *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
'Backward-Looking' U.S. Bill on Cuba Denounced *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 17 May]* 12
Shumeyko Discusses Investment With EBRD President *[ITAR-TASS]* 13
Japan Seen Shunning Russian Expertise in Gas Probe *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 18 May]* 13

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Issues

Yeltsin Signs Laws on Presidential Elections, Baykonur *[ITAR-TASS]* 15
Signs Laws on Education, Servicemen in Chechnya *[SEGODNYA 17 May]* 15
To Review Results of VE-Day in TV Address *[ITAR-TASS]* 15
'Democratic' Representatives Urge Campaign Collaboration *[TRUD 17 May]* 15
Split Develops Between Yabloko, Gaydar's Party *[IZVESTIYA 18 May]* 16
Gaydar Presents Party's Economic Program *[Madrid EL MUNDO 16 May]* 16
Rybkin, Chernomyrdin Blocs' Strategies Assessed *[ROSSIYA 17-23 May]* 17
'Left-Wing' Electoral Bloc Applies for Registration *[INTERFAX]* 18
Rybkin To Lead New Movement *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 18 May]* 19
Kozyrev To Remain Independent of Electoral Blocs *[INTERFAX]* 19
Agrarian Leader Criticizes Pro-Yeltsin Blocs *[ITAR-TASS]* 19
Lapshin Hails Spurning of Chernomyrdin Bloc *[SELSKAYA ZHIZN 18 May]* 20
Zyuganov Cited on Possible Allies, Relations With LDPR *[PRAVDA ROSSII 18 May]* 20
Communists Seen Ill-Prepared for Elections *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 16 May]* 20
Gorbachev Interviewed on Presidential Campaign *[Radio Rossii]* 22
'The New Russia' Movement Officially Registered *[ITAR-TASS]* 23
Central Electoral Commission Chairman Interviewed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 16 May]* 23

Military Issues

Prosecutors Fear Rosvooruzheniye Probe Could Go Deeper *[SEGODNYA 18 May]* 27
Marines' Record in Chechnya Defended *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 17 May]* 27

Federal Assembly

Duma Statement Condemns Croatia's Offensive *[INTERFAX]* 30
Duma Votes To Send Observers for Crimean Referendum *[INTERFAX]* 30
Nuclear Energy Bills Fail To Pass Third Reading *[SEGODNYA 18 May]* 30
State Duma Passes Radioactive Waste Law *[Moscow Radio]* 31
Nuclear Privatization Legislation Disputed *[IZVESTIYA 17 May]* 31
Duma Approves Bill To Protect Families, Minors *[ITAR-TASS]* 32
Law Passed on Services for Elderly, Disabled *[INTERFAX]* 32
Duma Postpones Decision on Federation Council *[ITAR-TASS]* 33

Regional Affairs

Group Heads to Chechen Village To Identify Body *[INTERFAX]* 33
Political Leaders Assert Willingness To Negotiate on Chechnya 33
Chernomyrdin: Talks 'Unilateral Wish' *[ITAR-TASS]* 33
Sees 'New Basis' for Negotiations *[INTERFAX]* 33
Abdulatipov Blames Politicians for Impasse *[ITAR-TASS]* 34
Chechnya's Maskhadov Calls For Halt in Fighting *[INTERFAX]* 34
General Reacts to Maskhadov's Appeal for Peace *[ITAR-TASS]* 34

Update on Chechnya Battlefield Situation 35
'Disunited' Chechen Groups Continue Attacks *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
'Relative Calm' Around Bamut *[INTERFAX]* 35
Preparations 'Completed' for New Offensive *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Conflicting Stories About Oil Depot Fire *[PRAVDA 18 May]* 36
Chechen Offers Guarantees to Deserting Soldiers *[IPRINDA]* 36
Displaced Persons Number 370,000 *[Moscow 2x2 TV]* 36
Minister Gives Reassurances on Food Supplies *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 17 May]* 37
Justice Minister Promises 'Whole Truth' on Chechnya *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 17 May]* 37
Luzhkov To Run Again for Moscow Mayor *[ITAR-TASS]* 39
Power Cuts Affect Strategic Bases in Arkhangelsk Region *[ITAR-TASS]* 39
Further on Arkhangelsk Power Cuts *[Moscow RTV]* 40
Novosibirsk Citizens Polled on 'Internal Enemies' *[VECHERNIY NOVOSIBIRSK 10 May]* 40
Irkutsk Branch of 'Russia Is Our Home' Formed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 17 May]* 42
Sakha President Writes on Federal Treaty *[REPUBLIKA SAKHA 31 Mar]* 42

Economic Issues

Aide Previews Presidential Budget Message *[ITAR-TASS]* 47
Davydov Says Debt Payment to London Club on Track *[SEGODNYA 17 May]* 47
Yasin Hopes To Keep Inflation at 2-3 Percent Monthly *[ITAR-TASS]* 47
New Customs Duty Rates To Fuel Inflation *[IZVESTIYA 17 May]* 47
Central Bank Prime Rate Set at 195 Percent Per Annum *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 17 May]* 48
New Federal Bonds Aimed at Covering Budget Deficit *[SEGODNYA 18 May]* 48
Commission Examines Raising Budget Revenues From Alcohol *[INTERFAX]* 49
Treasury Said Badly Hurt by Illegal Liquor Trade *[SEGODNYA 18 May]* 49
Ministry Announces Audit of Energy Sector Enterprises *[SEGODNYA 18 May]* 50
Decree on Natural Gas Exports Published *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 17 May]* 50

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Envoy to United States Queried on Activities *[VYSOKYY ZAMOK 6 May]* 51
Cuban Envoy Briefs on Economic Cooperation *[KIYEVSKIYE NOVOSTI 12 May]* 52
Deputy Premier's Israeli Visit Increases Ties *[UNIAR]* 53
UK's Clarke Pledges Aid in Repaying External Debt *[UNIAN]* 53
Kuchma To Visit Brussels To Explain NATO Position *[INTERFAX]* 53
Transport Protocol Signed With Yugoslavia *[UKRINFORM]* 54
Lithuanian Deputy on Visas, Trade Agreement *[INTERFAX]* 54

National Affairs

Kuchma on Lack of Cooperation With Supreme Council *[UNIAN]* 54
Youths' Political Preferences, Attitudes Surveyed *[MOLOD UKRAYINY 12 May]* 54
Kuchma Meets Oil Managers, Council Heads in Poltava *[Kiev Radio]* 55
Supreme Council Passes Bill on Dismissal of Members *[INTERFAX]* 56
Moroz Views National Issues, Crimea Conflict *[Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND 16 May]* 56
Doroshenko on Moroz's Opposition To President *[UNIAN]* 57
Pro-Ukraine Majority in Crimean Parliament Likely *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 17 May]* 58
Crimean Tatar Rally Opts for 'Self-Defense Detachments' *[HOLOS UKRAYINY 13 May]* 58
Crimea Welcomes Russian Duma Observers *[UNIAR]* 59
Chernobyl Closure Costed at $4 Billion *[ITAR-TASS]* 59

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Referendum Results Indicate Support for Lukashenka *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 17 May]* 61
Reports of Russian Customs Officers Denied *[Minsk Radio]* 61
Tripartite Customs Union Agreement *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 5 May]* 61

Moldova

Lebed Suggests Peacekeepers' Status for 14th Army *[ITAR-TASS]* 64
14th Army Reform Seen Rekindling Dniester Conflict *[OBSHCHAYA GAZETA 24 May]* 64
'Constructive Dialogue' Wanted With Russia on 14th Army *[INTERFAX]* 65
Joint Venture With Russian Gas Company Set Up *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 17 May]* 65

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Premier Kazhegeldin on Reforms, Russian Ties *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA]* 66
Review of National Political Movements *[EKSPRESS 12 May]* 68
Kuttykadam Reviews Recent Political Trends *[KARAVAN 12 May]* 69
Verk Assails Local Press *[KARAVAN 12 May]* 70

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Receives Slovak Government Delegation *[Bishkek Radio]* 72
Slovak Delegation Concludes Visit *[ITAR-TASS]* 72
Akayev Calls for Inter-Ethnic Integration *[INTERFAX]* 72
Military Accords With Russia Ratified *[Bishkek TV]* 73

Tajikistan

Dushanbe Radio Reports Rakhmanov Meetings in Kabul *[Dushanbe Radio]* 73
Opposition Reports Progress at Talks *[INTERFAX]* 73
Kazakh President To Meet Islamic Movement Leaders *[Voice of Free Tajikistan]* 74
Currency, Wage, Price Turmoil; Karimov Cited *[PRAVDA 18 May]* 74

Turkmenistan

Slovak Delegation Signs Economic Memorandum *[NARODNA OBRODA 16 May]* 75
Niyazov Appoints Turkish Businessman Deputy Minister *[Ankara ANATOLIA]* 75

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Power Engineering Agreement Signed With Iran *[ECONOMIC NEWS AGENCY]* 76
Spokesman Favors Oil Pipeline Project *[INTERFAX]* 76
Bagratyan Addresses Parliament on Privatization *[INTERFAX]* 76
Four Deputies Elected in Karabakh Runoff Elections *[Yerevan Radio]* 76
Defense Minister Appointed National Security Chief *[ITAR-TASS]* 77
Reactions to ARF Member's Death Detailed *[NOYAN TAPAN]* 77
Suspension of Russian-Language Paper Protested *[SEGODNYA 17 May]* 77

Azerbaijan

OSCE Military Delegation Arrives *[TURAN]* 78
Defense Ministry on Armenian 'Propaganda' *[AZERTAC]* 78
Russian Source Views 'Contradictions' in Talks *[TURAN]* 78
Envoy Says Karabakh Status Demand Unacceptable *[TURAN]* 79
Deputy Speaker on CIS Assembly; Party Membership Declared *[Baku TV]* 79
Discussion of Pipeline Through Georgia to Europe *[TURAN]* 79

Georgia

Deputy Foreign Minister, German Envoy Meet *[Tbilisi Radio]* 80
Chance of Georgian-Abkhazian Compromise Assessed *[PRAVDA 17 May]* 80
Pro-Georgian Abkhaz Government To Seek Help *[INTERFAX]* 81
Communist Party Head Views Prospects, Policies *[KOMUNISTI 4 May]* 81

BALTIC STATES

Estonia

Riigikogu Amends 1995 Budget, Increases Reserves *[Tallinn Radio]* 85
Parliament Ratifies Ukraine Investments Agreement *[INTERFAX]* 85

Latvia

President Views Official Visit to Portugal *[Riga Radio]* 85
President Praises Decision To Take Over Bank *[BNS]* 85
Baltic Justice Ministers Sign Cooperation Pact *[Riga Radio]* 86

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 18 May

LD1805060495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0547 GMT 18 May 95

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 18 (Itar-Tass) — The Moscow-based Russian press devotes increasing attention to the forthcoming elections to the State Duma.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI states that President Boris Yeltsin, judging from the opinion of his aides, will sign a State Duma Election Bill in the coming days. The Bill was adopted by a qualified majority of the Lower House of Parliament, At the same time, the President reserves the right to suggest amendments to the new law.

The newspaper points out that the President still disagrees in particular with the bill-stipulated ratio of deputies to be elected on party tickets and in single-seat districts (1-1). ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI also maintains that the Bill limits the possibilities of state and municipal employees to participate in the election struggle, which, in the newspaper's view, restrains their civil rights.

IZVESTIYA points out that "a (Yegor) Gaydar-(Grigoriy) Yavlinskiy alliance, which was about to emerge, has broken up finally."

According to the newspaper, the Political Council of Russia's Democratic Choice party in the coming days will possibly take a decision forbidding Party Leader Gaydar to hold any political consultations with Yabloko party leader Yavlinskiy.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA runs a final installment of an article about Russian diplomacy. The newspaper states that one of the causes of diplomatic setbacks is in the lack of a "single all-Federal mechanism for the elaboration, adoption and enactment of foreign-policy decisions".

"A continuation of our previous foreign-policy line, which, as it has now become obvious, proved erroneous, is fraught with a further loss by Russia of its positions in the international arena and coolness of its relations with countries of both West and East, as well as the United States."

The newspaper's opinion is that "the need to replace Foreign minister", who proved "his bureaucratic inability" to pursue a "Presidential foreign policy", is becoming urgent.

In IZVESTIYA, Yegor Gaydar sets out the foreign-policy concept of Russia's Democratic Choice. He believes that "fear of the West is senseless" and that "there are no reasons to view the strengthening of NATO as a threat to Russia's interests".

Gaydar is of the opinion that a military-political alliance with large democratic countries is of benefit to Russia militarily, economically and geopolitically. He also comes out in favour of drawing Japan into an allied relationship in the Far East and calls for compromising with it over the Kuriles issue.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries an interview with President Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan in view of his current visit to Moscow. Niyazov emphasises that "Russia is a fundamental partner and ally of Turkmenistan in both politics, economics, education and culture".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA runs an article by Lidiya Bezlepkina, Russian Minister for the Social Protection of the Population. She arrives at a conclusion that a steady social development of a country is the basis of its national security. Bezlepkina comes out in favour of Russia's "new technological make-up aimed at raising the living standards of its citizens".

Newspapers devote much attention to reports from Tokyo about the arrest of Shoko Asahara, leader of the sect AUM Shinrikyo.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA states in this connection that the Moscow adherents of the sect have gone underground.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (Red Star) runs an interview with Colonel Alexander Zhukov, Chief of the Financial and Economic department of the Black Sea Fleet, about the Fleet financing problems.

Contrary to agreements signed by the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine, Russia came to shoulder the entire burden of expenditure on the maintenance of the Black Sea Fleet since December 1993.

Only 68 percent of the financing of the Fleet's basic needs was ensured last year and only 30 percent, so far, this year.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA carries an interview with Russian Federation Communist Party Chairman Gennadiy Zyuganov who points out in particular that the Party's Central Committee is to hold a plenary meeting at the end of June to discuss all matters concerning the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections.

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Ministry Denies Secret Nuclear Deal With Iran

LD1805113395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1024 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 18 (Interfax) — The Russian Ministry for Nuclear Energy (Minatom) has not signed any secret contracts with Iran for deliveries to that country of gas centrifuges for enriching Uranium. This statement was made on Thursday in an interview with Interfax by First Deputy Russian Ministry [as received] for Nuclear Energy Vitaliy Konovalov.

He described as "absurd" all statements about the existence of such deals. At the same time, Konovalov said that Iran had asked Russia to consider the possible sale of nuclear high technology and the construction of a factory for the production of fuel for nuclear power stations.

According to Konovalov, "This request was specified in the protocol, which was signed by Minatom Minister Viktor Mikhailov following the result of one of his visits to Iran." "This was merely Iran's request, and Russia did not assume any commitments," said Konovalov.

According to him, Moscow does "not intend to sell centrifuges nor to build in Iran a factory for the production of nuclear fuel." "A country with one nuclear power station does not need such a factory," said Konovalov.

He said that such a factory would be profitable only if the country had at least 10-15 nuclear power plants.

Iran Deal Pending Until Gore-Chernomyrdin Talks

MK1805105095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Report by Georgiy Bovt under the "Regarding the Russian-Iranian Nuclear Deal" rubric: "Either Information or Nuclear Technology Is Leaking"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi unexpectedly threw his two cents in the ongoing scandal over the Russian-Iranian deal. He said that the Arabs really need a nuclear bomb to counter Israel's military arsenal, which, according to the colonel, already contains 200 nuclear devices.

Al-Qadhdhafi was speaking as if in polemics with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who dismissed as "fully unconvincing" assertions by Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the effect that Tehran lacks its own military nuclear program. While al-Qadhdhafi may have possibly meant Christopher's statement, what Christopher himself had in mind was, without any doubt, the Russian-Iranian deal, which Washington is still seeking to cancel. Not only have the results of the Moscow summit between Yeltsin and Clinton satisfied very few people in Washington, but they raised new questions and also appear to have strengthened the United States' resolve to stand its ground.

Attention has been firmly focused on a mysterious (since no one is really talking about the fate of this device) gas centrifuge, on which Iran's ability to enrich uranium in order to make it weapons-grade allegedly depends. Yeltsin appears to have promised to Clinton that it will not be sold. On the other hand (also apparently) there has been no contract to deliver it, therefore the Russian president appears to have given up to his American counterpart something nonexistent, without compromising reactors for the Iranian nuclear power plant in Bushehr. But not all is that simple.

On 16 May the State Duma held closed-door hearings on the Russian-Iranian transaction, which was attended by Andrey Kozyrev, who answered questions for two hours. Presumably, materials of these hearings would give much food for reflection and speculation, for they remained closed only until a deputy slipped into the Duma lobby and leaked this information to REUTER. According to the anonymous source, Kozyrev allegedly said that Moscow would make a definitive decision on the transaction only after the Gore-Chernomyrdin intergovernment commission has passed its judgment by 7 June and Boris Yeltsin has said his weighty word. What meets the eye in Kozyrev's statement for INTERFAX — which says: "We in the Foreign Ministry have our own approach" — is that it is directly at odds with what Atomic Energy Minister Vladimir Mikhaylov said 12 May (his ministry's approach is evidently somewhat different). According to Mikhaylov's theory, Russia is still moving toward implementation of the nuclear deal with Tehran, while Kozyrev believes that "there is nothing dramatic about that" and that "the atomic minister" was expressing just his private point of view. Mikhaylov appears to have the same opinion about Kozyrev's viewpoint. But the most curious thing is not even the differences, but the history, of the gas centrifuge that Yeltsin "gave up" to Clinton. Judging from the revelations of the anonymous Duma member to REUTER, Kozyrev said at the Duma hearings that the Atomic Energy Ministry had concluded on its own a deal with Iran (independent of the reactor contract) to deliver a centrifuge, a deal that turned out to be secret — it was allegedly unknown to anybody outside the Atomic Energy Ministry, including to President Yeltsin.

The near future will tell whether the anonymous Duma member's revelations were a well-orchestrated action designed to prove the reality of the centrifuge contract and, hence, the reality of Yeltsin's concessions to Clinton made for the sake of saving the main contract.

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Or the materials on the Duma hearings will spark a loud domestic scandal between the Foreign Ministry and the Atomic Energy Ministry. If this turns out to be the case, attention will be centered on the problem of the existence of a powerful lobby in Russia which is interested in the sale of state-of-the-art military nuclear technologies, including to "dubious regimes."

Official on Cancellation of Centrifuge Sale

LD1705203395 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1630 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As is known,the international conference on extending the treaty on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons took place over a month in New York. Taking part in its work was the well-known politician Ala Yaroshenskaya. Our correspondent Olga Vasilenko had a meeting with her and asked her to describe the results of the conference, and how the work proceeded, on the very important, one might say historic, documents. [passage omitted on work of conference]

[Begin recording] [Vasilenko] Ala Aleksandrovna, while you were in New York with our delegation very important questions about our relations with Iran were being resolved here in Moscow. An opinion was expressed about the existence of some secret documents which we do not know about.

[Yaroshenskaya] This deal was discussed every day both in public and in the corridors of the conference. The last straw was the protocol on the talks between Professor Mikhaylov, atomic energy minister of the Russian Federation, and Dr. Amrollahi, deputy president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and president of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

And, of course, many people were simply amazed by what that protocol contained. I shall quote from it: In a period of six months the sides will instruct their competent organizations to prepare and sign a contract for the construction in Iran of a uranium mine and afterwards to hold talks on signing a contract for the construction of a centrifugal works to enrich uranium. And of course this worried those present at the meeting and, of course, this is contrary to the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons because this concerns technology and this is a very serious matter.

I must say that everything concerning the uranium mine and the centrifuge works has been annulled and that President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin took an active part in this. I think that this decision was absolutely correct. That is, we shall build a nuclear reactor, but the cancellation of those parts which run counter to our sensible nonproliferation of nuclear technology which could lead to the creation of nuclear weapons, that is absolutely correct. [end recording]

Clinton Visit to Kiev, NATO Expansion Assessed

MK1705110095 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian, No. 34, 14-21 May 95 (Signed to Press 16 May) p 7

[Report by Sergey Tikhiy, MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI's own correspondent in Kiev, in the "News, Comments" column: "When Heated, NATO Expands. In Kiev, a Warm Welcome Was Accorded the U.S. President"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The one and a half day visit by the U.S. President to Kiev was apparently of a "compensatory" character to both sides. Bill Clinton received an opportunity to soften the tough criticism of his "disappointing" visit to Moscow by a guaranteed successful visit to Ukraine, which many Americans still continue to identify with Russia. The guarantees of success were ensured for the most part by the Ukraine side and were also related to Russia: Kiev, exposed to continuous pressure, desperately needs "moral" dividends from direct contacts with the head of the last superpower. Some of the details, which were revealed by Yuriy Shcherbak, Ukraine ambassador to the United States, in an interview with UNIAN agency, can be accounted for only by the desire to produce a psycho-therapeutic effect. According to Shcherbak, although it is not usual practice to sign documents like a joint statement on the results of negotiations between the U.S. and Ukraine presidents, Bill Clinton responded to Leonid Kuchma's personal plea: Both leaders put their signatures in a solemn situation, in the presence of a large number of photo and TV reporters.

The meetings in Kiev, however, brought also a number of other, more concrete surprises. These include a statement made by President Kuchma on the first day of negotiations to the effect that Ukraine does not object to NATO expansion. Earlier, Ukraine opposed this together with Russia. True, as many believed, for other reasons. The proximity of the bloc's borders to Russia could prompt Moscow to speed up the formation of its own bloc at any price, and it would be very difficult for Kiev to get out of being involved in it.

How can this change in Ukraine's position be explained? Three possible reasons are being mentioned the most often today. First, Leonid Kuchma's recent visit to Prague, where President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, as some commentators suppose, persuaded his Ukraine counterpart not to object to NATO expansion in exchange for the lobbying of Ukraine's interests in European structures, related primarily to the

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issue of credits and support for Ukraine in its admission to the Council of Europe.

Second, after the negotiations by heads of the Ukraine and U.S. foreign policy departments within the framework of the visit, Kiev began to talk about the possibility of special cooperation between Ukraine and NATO. Ukraine Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko chose not to reveal the details. But Kiev apparently hopes that the question of admitting Romania into the alliance can be addressed only after it has officially abandoned its territorial claims on Ukraine. Furthermore, NATO should also appreciate the fact that Kiev joined the Partnership for Peace program literally within days of its "presentation" by Bill Clinton last January. During his latest visit to Kiev the U.S. President even promised to help the Ukraine military department financially, so that Ukraine army units could take part in joint activities under the program. True, the sums he offered are indecently small: $1 million this year and $10 next year. (For comparison: Poland will get $25 million from the United States for the same purpose).

Finally, there is a belief that the "NATO question" was coordinated with Moscow. Confirmation of this can be the consent by Russia itself to join Partnership for Peace.

This version is also corroborated by the sides' obvious unwillingness to tease Russia. This trend was even more conspicuous in the Americans' behavior. For instance, the United States said that it renounces the idea of acting as intermediary between Ukraine and Russia on the division of the Black Sea Fleet. This is much more substantial than the routine statement that the Crimean problem should be resolved with territorial integrity being ensured.

Ukraine diplomatic failures also include Bill Clinton's effective refusal to support the idea of the Ukraine president's addressing the participants in the June G-7 meeting in Halifax, even though Clinton did promise to communicate the point Kuchma wanted to bring up: the $4.5 billion that Ukraine seeks as compensation for the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power station. [passage omitted]

Deputy Defense Minister Quoted on NATO Expansion

MK1705114095 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Report by Maksim Isayev in the "In Brief" column under the "NATO" rubric: "Kokoshin Agrees With Norwegian General"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting for NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the sensational statement by Norwegian General Dagfin Danielsen (head of Norway's Military Mission to NATO) against NATO's eastward expansion, Andrey Kokoshin, Russian first deputy defense minister, noted that this statement is consonant with the opinion of many top-ranking military officials in different NATO countries. In addition to a number of prominent political figures in the West, professional NATO military people have also been increasingly demonstrating, in explicit or implicit form, their negative attitude toward NATO expansion.

According to Kokoshin, people in the West are become increasingly responsive to Russia's geopolitical arguments against eastward NATO expansion. This process will lead to eliminating the zone of reduced concentration of armed forces and military means and of low military activity, which emerged due to the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact. This zone, as a result of new social and political conditions, is no analogue to the "cordon sanitaire" between the USSR and West European countries, built by the West. It is meant to ensure strategic stability, taking into consideration the sides' offensive capabilities. The availability of this zone can play an important stabilizing role in the hypothetical case of any conflict or critical situation in the future.

In the opinion of some independent experts, the U.S. political elite's attitude toward NATO expansion and the role of the United States in this organization is becoming rather ambiguous, too. Specifically, in the U.S. Congress, where the Republicans have gained the majority in both houses, there are quite strong sentiments in favor of the United States' "not feeling constrained" by its obligations within NATO's framework. Therefore, many experts both in this country and abroad believe — not without grounds — that the eastward expansion of NATO is not inevitable.

Foreign Minister Comments on NATO Issue

LD1705163295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1508 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — Andrey Kozyrev believes that the most important achievement of the past five to six months is that the extremely complicated issue of NATO's expansion is now discussed in the broader context of European security.

He said at a meeting with journalists in the Interfax Moscow headquarters that the aim must be to create a united Europe devoid of front lines or old or new antagonisms. This approach would solve the issues of NATO, its evolution, relations with it and the partnership program, Kozyrev believes.

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One of the achievements of the Russian-American May summit was moving the discussion of key issues such as European security and NATO from the bureaucratic corridors to the top decision-making level, he said.

Kozyrev emphasized that there are no ready-made models for all-European security.

He explained that this was so because the problem is highly complicated and its solution must meet the interests of all parties concerned, not only of NATO and Russia.

In Kozyrev's view, it would be a disastrous error to revive the view of NATO as the enemy. He likewise warned the West against reviving the Russia as enemy equation by exploiting its internal problems and tragedies such as Chechnya.

He said that Moscow understood "it is up to every European country to decide which alliance to join." "But each has the need to refrain from hasty decisions."

Kozyrev Favors 'Energetic' Foreign Policy

LD1705170895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1619 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by our diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said he was in favor of "a foreign policy which will be firm and even aggressive but not in military sense." He said he meant an energetic foreign policy when he spoke about aggressiveness.

Kozyrev told journalists in the Interfax central office on Tuesday that "all these characteristics are good. And I'm just happy when I hear this about Russia's foreign policy."

Kozyrev stressed that Russia's foreign policy could not be "nationalist in the sense of being xenophobic, imperial or chauvinist." He said this must not be admitted, "first of all because Russia is multinational. Secondly, because we are interested in having the CIS. Thirdly, because Russia's natural national interests can and must be realized not through confrontation with the external world, the United States for example, but through partnership and cooperation."

Kozyrev said that the essence of the "democratic revolution," the reforms in Russia which he actively supported consisted in moving from "an ideological country or super-country as the Communist USSR was to a national country reflecting and defending the interests of concrete people."

Kozyrev said that "in this sense Russia's foreign policy is being transformed from an ideology-based policy into a natural policy of a natural national country."

Kozyrev on Settlement of Karabakh Conflict

LD1705184795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1607 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev believes there is a possibility to settle the Karabakh conflict if both parties are willing to compromise. "Russia will do its best to achieve this," Kozyrev told an exclusive Interfax interview.

He praised the year-long cease-fire in the conflict zone. "It is good people are no longer dying in Karabakh. But it is important to consolidate the truce regime and finally achieve political settlement," added Kozyrev.

The minister hopes for the success of Moscow negotiations on Karabakh settlement. "Not a single day should be wasted. That is why, I met negotiation participants in Moscow on Tuesday [16 May]," said Kozyrev.

The negotiations, underway with the mediation of representatives of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk conference and observers from Commonwealth bodies, are attended by delegations from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Asked about any possible influence from the upcoming elections in Armenia and Azerbaijan on the Karabakh settlement, Kozyrev said "No matter what the outcome of these elections might be, the people are not likely to vote for a policy of war."

Kozyrev Quoted on Use of Caspian Sea Resources

LD1705184395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1607 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told an exclusive Interfax interview that decisions on the use of the Caspian Sea and its resources must be taken "by all coastal states."

In his words, "unilateral actions are inadmissible and Russia will not recognize them."

"The Caspian Sea is a sea only by name. In fact, it is an interior water pond. The word 'sea' is a literary epithet when used as regards the Caspian Sea," noted Kozyrev.

In his words, "The only internationally-recognized document on the regime of Caspian use is the Soviet-Iranian

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treaty of 1921. This document will remain valid till all Caspian nations work out a new agreement."

The minister reaffirmed the Russian "intensive consultations" with its partners on a new agreement to regulate the regime of Caspian use. "This is a topic which has been recently discussed by Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Albert Chernyshev in the region. As far as I know, the contacts were businesslike and constructive," said Kozyrev.

Meanwhile, in the words of independent Russian experts, the Caspian republics of the former Soviet Union — Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan — have been trying to unilaterally boost the development of hydrocarbon deposits on the Caspian Sea bed areas adjoining them.

"Baku, Almaty and Ashgabat do not deny the international nature of the Caspian Sea but are trying to divide the Caspian Sea bed into economic zones," said an expert.

Foreign Ministry Statement on Ex-Yugoslavia

LD1705193695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1923 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Raging conflict in ex-Yugoslavia evokes "most serious concern", the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement released on Wednesday [17 May] referring to another outbreak of fighting in Sarajevo.

"An overall escalation of hostilities between Bosnian sides is being observed, and cases of violence against the United Nations personnel are becoming more common", the statement said.

However, the latest developments could not be viewed as unexpected, it was noted in the statement. These were predictable results of the Bosnian sides' refusal to extend the ceasefire as well as dangerous plans of certain forces in Bosnia to reach their goals by military means.

Tuesday's events in Sarajevo give a convincing evidence to it, the statement continued. "If this goes on this way, a new 'Sarajevo crisis' which can lead to rollback of the situation in Bosnia itself and in the Bosnian settlement for a year or a year an a half, will be unavoidable."

The Foreign Ministry called on conflicting sides to "display responsibility and common sense, stop counting on force, agree on ceasefire, and immediately put up negotiations on the basis of the contact group's peace plan".

Grachev Notes PRC Desire To Establish Closer Ties

LD1705151795

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1300 GMT on 17 May broadcasts the "Vesti" newscast in which correspondent K. Belov presents a three-minute report from Beijing on Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev's visit. He had talks with Defense Minister Chi Haotian and Liu Huaqing, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission who is engaged in reform of the Chinese Army.

"Judging by the composition of the delegations of the two sides, during the talks questions of military-technical cooperation were not avoided, but in view of the delicacy of these questions both the Russian and Chinese military men tried not to expand on this subject," Belov said.

Grachev and Chi Haotian signed a protocol on exchange of delegations and discussed problems of reciprocal reduction of Armed Forces and armaments in the 200-km zone along our common frontier, the correspondent said.

"The scale of the reductions are still a stumbling block in our relations. Undoubtedly this question will be one of the main ones during the coming visit of the Russian president to the People's Republic of China," the correspondent said, adding that preparations for the visit were discussed during Grachev's meeting with PRC President Jiang Zemin.

"Receiving Grachev at this supreme level, the Chinese side tried to stress its interest in the development of military cooperation with Russia," the correspondent said.

Grachev said in an interview: "One can feel the kindness on the part of the Chinese partners, one can feel the desire to establish communications, one can feel the wish to return to the times, as they put it, when we sang the song 'Moscow-Beijing'."

Grachev Cited on Talks With PRC Leaders, Visit

OW1805093195 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Mandarin 1100 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Current Events and Commentary" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] During his visit to China, Russian Defense Minister Grachev held talks with Defense Minister General Chi Haotian, and was received by President Jiang Zemin. Station reporter Kurnil reports:

The Russian and Chinese defense ministers discussed many issues. For example, at the Russian defense minister's suggestion they discussed the establishment

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of a joint security system in the Asia-Pacific region. After the talks concluded, Grachev told reporters that the establishment of a joint security system is a long-term strategic task. He said: To accomplish this goal will not be easy because not all countries are ready to discuss the issue. However, we must give it some thought. He called the regional security system consisting of Russia, the United States, Japan, China, and South Korea a short-ter goal. Grachev said: Russia and China basically share similar opinions about this issue. He said: Not long ago when U.S. Secretary of Defense Perry visited Russia, Moscow put forward the same suggestion. Grachev said emphatically: This kind of security system does not mean forming a new bloc. It only indicates that countries in this area are willing to safeguard peace through joint efforts and actions.

Another important issue Grachev discussed with the Chinese leaders in Beijing was the possibility of reducing border guard forces and armaments of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and Russian Army along border areas, and the possibility of signing an agreement on this issue. While talking with journalists, the Russian defense minister said: We have held 15 rounds of talks to discuss this issue. Both sides will reach agreement despite the fact that some different views still exist. For example, Russia and China share different views about the numbers of arms and forces in the 100-kilometer wide Russian border area. They will continue to discuss this problem. Yet, I think both sides will sign an agreement on this issue soon. At the same time, both sides are hoping that before the Russian President visits China later this year, they will draft an agreement on mutual trust along the 100- kilometer wide area of the Russia-China border.

During the talks between the Russian defense minister and his Chinese counterpart, they touched on China's 15 May nuclear test. General Chi Haotian explained this, pointing out: In the past, nuclear countries in the West conducted far more nuclear tests than China, and their nuclear weapons are more advanced than China. Meanwhile, the Chinese defense minister said China stands for complete prohibition of nuclear tests, and it will stop nuclear tests provided a relevant treaty is signed.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that during his meeting with journalists, Grachev firmly refuted some subjective assertions indicated by some media that the purpose of his delegation's visit to China was to discuss selling Russian arms.

President of Turkmenistan in Moscow for Summit

Foreign Ministers Meet Before Summit

LD1705135695 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 17 May 95

[Video report by Andrey Murtazin on meeting between Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Turkmen Foreign Minister Boris Shikhmuradov on 17 May; from the "Novosti" newscast—broadcast in progress]

[FBIS Translated Text] ...a gloss on our relations. That is how Andrey Kozyrev described bilateral cooperation at a meeting with his Turkmen colleague, Boris Shikhmuradov. Both parties are waiting for tomorrow's Moscow summit, during which it is expected that Boris Yeltsin and [Turkmen President] Saparmurad Niyazov will sign more than 22 bilateral agreements.

The foundation for effective Russian-Turkmen cooperation was laid in 1992 during the first official visit by the leader of Turkmenistan to Moscow. Both sides are counting on raising cooperation to a qualitatively new level.

[Begin Shikhmuradov recording] Tomorrow we will witness the birth of a new tradition, the basis of which is a principled attitude, at least as far as Turkmenistan is concerned, to Russia as a long-term, strategic ally and partner. [end recording]

Andrey Kozyrev, for his part, stressed that Russia is developing partnerships not only in the West but in the East as well and Turkmenistan is an example of this.

Commentary Views Ties, Differences

MM1805085095 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 May 95 First Edition p 7

["Commentary" by Grigoriy Smolnikov ahead of visit to Moscow by Turkmenistan President S. Niyazov: "Ashgabat Has Things To Discuss With Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ashgabat — The last meeting between Saparmurat Niyazov and Boris Yeltsin was in December 1993 during the Commonwealth heads' Ashgabat summit.

On that occasion the Russian president was presented with a green Turkmen passport. It symbolized the agreement that had been signed on dual citizenship. But Moscow and Ashgabat have amassed a large amount of urgent business since then.

For instance, Turkmenistan is clearly concerned that Russia has voluntarily almost completely quit the local market. In the past it used to supply 60 percent of the

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consumer goods, timber, technology, and metallurgical products. Moscow's current share of Turkmen foreign trade is only 8 percent, and it has slumped to fourth place below Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Turkey. A massive pool of combines, tractors, and drills is standing idle on Turkmen farms due to a major shortage of spare parts. Ashgabat has been forced to buy very expensive U.S. and German equipment which is not suited to Turkmen fields.

Around 2,000 Russian officers are serving in Turkmen border forces. But neither the good money nor the early promotions keep them there. This is threatening a long delay in the formation of the army, which also needs new combat equipment. Last year "Rosvooruzheniye" concluded a contract to supply it in exchange for 5 billion cubic meters of natural gas for southern regions of Russia. But the agreement has not yet produced the goods. Moreover, recently the Russian Government renounced its former commitment to modernize the Turkmen air force and air defenses. No reasons were given. It appears that Moscow was reacting to S. Niyazov's statement about Turkmenistan's desire to be a neutral state, a kind of Central Asian Switzerland. Remember too that Ashgabat has not yet signed the treaty on collective security within the CIS and is generally keeping aloof from the other former union republics.

One of the main items on the agenda of the upcoming meeting will probably be the question of Moscow's participation in the construction of gas and oil pipelines from Turkmenistan to Europe, via Iran and Pakistan, and a railroad from Krasnovodsk to Uzen in Kazakhstan. Russia has shown little interest so far in these projects, having established only one joint venture to provide installations for oil and gas fields. As far as one can tell Ashgabat wants the old partner to lend a hand here too: Evidently so it will be easier for Turkmenistan to talk with neighboring countries.

Saparmurat Niyazov has said more than once publicly and privately that Russia is, of course, busy with its own important business but that it is wrong to neglect Turkmenistan. Incidentally, this visit by the Ashgabat leader has been repeatedly postponed for various reasons. But, to all appearances, the sides have realized that they cannot put it off any longer.

Niyazov Arrives, Meets Chernomyrdin

LD1705203195 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] A Turkmen Government delegation led by the republic's President Saparmurad Niyazov arrived on an official visit to Moscow today.

[Correspondent R. Babayan] The visit is to result in the signing of a number of agreements defining cooperation between Russia and Turkmenistan in the social, economic, military, and technical spheres. Official Ashgabat said this on the eve of the Turkmen leader's arrival in Moscow. Today the Turkmen president and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin signed an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the fuel and energy complex.

Chernomyrdin, addressing journalists after the signing ceremony, stressed that developing the Caspian Sea shelf would be the next stage of cooperation. Another important aspect of Russian-Turkmen relations is the situation of Russian speakers. Replying to this question from journalists, Niyazov said, yet again:

[Begin Niyazov recording] We are proud that there are no interethnic problems in Turkmenistan. Under the Constitution, all those who live in Turkmenistan, no matter what nationality, have equal rights. [end recording]

[Babayan] In Niyazov's words, through joint efforts they drew up a draft resolution today on protecting the interests of the Russian and Turkmen citizens in both states.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin will receive Niyazov in the Kremlin tomorrow.

Meets With Yeltsin 18 May

LD1805092095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0815 GMT 18 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Andrey Serov, Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 18 May — Turkmenistan is the first country with which Russia is moving over to strategic partnership and concluding a commercial and economic agreement up to the year 2000. President Boris Yeltsin said this today at talks with President Saparmurad Niyazov in the Kremlin today.

"Both countries have an interest in this," the Russian president said, "and this is a very positive step for our peoples." Boris Yeltsin proposed discussing priorities

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for cooperation between Moscow and Ashgabat "despite Turkmenistan's neutrality, which we recognize." According to him, specific bilateral agreements that include one on joint gas pipeline use will be concluded. The president of Russia also said that it is in the interests of Turkmenistan itself to take part in the CIS Interstate Economic Committee.

Boris Yeltsin highlighted among the topics discussed during the talks the possibility of Ashgabat countering the process of Islamization of the region. "This is very important, because this process could have grave consequences," he stressed. The Russian head of state is counting on Saparmurad Niyazov using his personal contacts to promote settlement of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border. "We want to live in friendship and cooperate with Afghanistan," Boris Yeltsin said.

He also touched on legal regulation of the regime for exploiting the natural wealth of the Caspian Sea, noting that this was "indivisible."

Yeltsin: Niyazov's Visit 'Breakthrough'

LD1805093695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0814 GMT 18 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Andrey Serov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 18 May — "I value the visit of my friend Saparmurad Niyazov, president of Turkmenistan, to Russia very much as it is a great breakthrough into the future of our relations." Boris Yeltsin said this today, answering a question by ITAR-TASS correspondent following the conclusion of the Russian-Turkmen talks and signing joint documents in the Kremlin.

"Today 23 documents were signed at different levels," Boris Yeltsin reported. He stressed that this is the first time that Russia has signed such a document as a political treaty on the protection of the Russian-speaking minority in Turkmenistan and of the Turkmen-speaking minority in Russia with a CIS member. The president also noted that Russia and Turkmenistan decided to establish strategic partnership in all spheres. "Today an agreement on trade and economic partnership for the period of up to year 2000 has already been signed, this is the first such document that Russia has concluded with a CIS country for such a long period. Usually we conclude such treaties for one-two years," the head of the Russian state said.

Yeltsin, Niyazov Discuss Caspian Sea

LD1805095595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0855 GMT 18 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Andrey Serov, Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 18 May — Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov's views and mine coincide: It is necessary to jointly develop a common program to utilize the resources of the Caspian Sea, for instance, in the sphere of biology and fishing. This statement was made by President Boris Yeltsin when he was answering questions from journalists after the Russian-Turkmen talks were concluded and the ceremony of signing the bilateral documents had ended in the Kremlin.

We must jointly develop the Caspian Sea in all spheres, and, of course, this involves the prospecting of oil and gas. "The Caspian Sea is a special inner sea, it cannot be divided either along its shores, or across its waters," added the Russian president.

Saparmurad Niyazov, in turn, noted that "the Caspian Sea must not become a new center of mistrust and tension. It must become an inner sea of peace and accord." According to the Turkmen president, the interests of every country bordering on the Caspian Sea must always be taken into account when examining the question of utilizing its resources. He expressed agreement with Boris Yeltsin concerning the necessity of adopting a common decision on this issue and on defining the legal status of the Caspian Sea, and then settling the question of utilizing its resources.

Presidents Discuss Tajik Settlement

LD1805095995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0907 GMT 18 May 95

[ITAR-TASS correspondents Andrey Serov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 18 May — Following his talks with Turkmenistan President Saparmurat Niyazov at the Kremlin, Russian President Boris Yeltsin told journalists today that he is counting on Turkmenistan's support in the settlement of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border. Politically, Turkmenistan is helping to alleviate the tension on the Tajik-Afghan border even now. Taking into account the influence and the authority of President Niyazov in Iran and Afghanistan, I rely on his help in the speedy settlement of the border conflict, Yeltsin said. He also said he is certain that with the support of Turkmenistan it will be possible to establish good relations with Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

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"As to Iran, we believe our relations with it are normal anyway," Yeltsin stressed.

Niyazov added that the joint border between Turkmenistan and Afghanistan is as long as 864 km and normal economic relations are developing along the entire border. He said that there is an agreement "to make it a peace and friendship border." Niyazov said that there is an agreement "not to take weapons into the 5 km-wide zone on both sides of the border."

Yeltsin, Niyazov Sign Documents

LD1805110495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1045 GMT 18 May 95

[By Andrey Serov, Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 18 (Itar-Tass) — A total of 23 bilateral documents have been signed as a result of an official visit of Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov to Russia, President Yeltsin told journalists after the end of the Russian-Turkmen talks, held in the Kremlin today.

Three documents were signed personally by Yeltsin and Niyazov. These are: a treaty between Russia and Turkmenistan on the legal status of citizens of the Russian Federation, living permanently in Turkmenistan, and Turkmen citizens, living permanently in Russia, a treaty between Russia and Turkmenistan on cooperation in upholding the rights of the Russian minority in Turkmenistan and the Turkmen minority in Russia, and a joint statement on the results of the official visit of the Turkmen President to Russia. An agreement on the main principles and directions of economic cooperation between the two countries for a period ending in 2000, signed on the level of governments of the two countries (it was signed by First Vice Premier of the Russian Federation Oleg Soskovets and President Niyazov), and an agreement on the "North-South" transport corridor across the Turkmen territory (signed by Vice Premier Aleksey Bolshakov and Deputy Chairman of the Turkmen Cabinet of Ministers Redzhep Saparov) are also among the most important documents. Bolshakov and Saparov signed as well an intergovernmental agreement on the mutual opening of trade missions.

Intergovernmental agreements between Russia and Turkmenistan on cooperation in the sphere of anti-aircraft defence, on the organisation of the airport handling of the aircraft and their guarding at military airfields of the other country, as well as an agreement on organising transportation of military cargoes between the two countries and payment transactions for them were also signed in the Kremlin today.

A number of agreements were concluded on the level of foreign ministries of the two countries. Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan Valeriy Otchertsov signed a consular convention, a bilateral agreement on the status of Russian mass media correspondents in Turkmenistan and of Turkmen mass media correspondents in Russia, an agreement on cooperation in the sphere of culture, education and science, a protocol on the exchange of ratification instruments, an agreement on the settlement of the problem of dual citizenship, an agreement on the regulation of the resettlement process and the protection of the rights of settlers, and an agreement on military service of Russian citizens in the Armed Forces of Turkmenistan and their status. Several agreements were signed on Wednesday night on the results of the talks between the two heads of government.

Yeltsin will give an official dinner for Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov in the Kremlin tonight. Niyazov had a meeting today with senior executives of Bank "Russian Credit", ITAR-TASS learned today from reliable sources in the Turkmen delegation. Its branch in Turkmenistan is one of the biggest financial institutions in the republic.

Yeltsin Said To Adopt Tougher Stance on Ukraine

MK1805073095 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

["NG"-attributed report in the "In Brief" column: "What Shall We Do With Ukraine?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the information available to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, the meeting held by Boris Yeltsin the day before yesterday on the topic, "What Shall We Do With Ukraine?," topic, was very tough. It was admitted that Russia's "compliance" — which had been made especially conspicuous during Oleg Soskovets' much discussed visit to Kiev — failed to bring the desired effect: Ukraine is becoming increasingly oriented toward the West, primarily toward the United States. Now Kuchma is going to be dropped a hint that the choice between Moscow and Washington — if done in line with the latest trends demonstrated by official Kiev — will have to be paid for by Ukraine itself. This includes financial aspects, too.

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Hardening Toward Kiev Seen Delaying Yeltsin Visit

MK1805094095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 18 May 95 p 4

[Report by Georgiy Bovt under the "Russian-Ukrainian Relations" rubric: "The Less Weapons Your Friend Has, the Better He Is"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the closed-door meeting on matters of Russian-Ukrainian relations, which was held under Boris Yeltsin's chairmanship in the Kremlin 16 May, ITAR-TASS disseminated a report whose phrasing appears to have been designed as a serious warning to Kiev. According to the news agency report citing the presidential press service, the meeting pointed out that "a special friendly relationship, an important element of which would be strategic partnership... will become a reality only when a solution on matters related to the Black Sea Fleet is found that will be acceptable to Russia." Therefore, the "special friendship" of the two Slavic republics has essentially become dependent on the solution to just one — military — question.

The Yeltsin-chaired meeting had a clear "power" emphasis: Apart from Viktor Chernomyrdin, his first deputy Oleg Soskovets, who has since recently been supervising talks with Kiev, and Andrey Kozyrev, also invited to attend it were Federal Security Service Director Sergey Stepashin, Foreign Intelligence Service Director Yevgeniy Primakov, General Staff Chief Mikhail Kolesnikov, and Navy Commander-in-Chief Feliks Gromov. On the evening of the same day, television news programs showed Boris Yeltsin's introductory comments pronounced in a well-modulated stern tone that was intended to leave no doubt whatsoever about the fact that relations between Moscow and Kiev have dropped to a dramatic low. The Kremlin has made it plainly clear to its neighbor that the tension will be eased once Ukraine makes concessions on the division of the Black Sea Fleet. For those who did not grasp that from the Russian president's tone, Andrey Kozyrev made explanations afterward. The crux of the explanations was that the Russian president will not go to Kiev to sign a treaty on friendship till the dispute regarding 300 ships of the Black Sea Fleet is resolved to Moscow's satisfaction.

Thus, the circle has closed, although earlier (right after Oleg Soskovets' visit to Kiev) it seemed that the package of agreements with Ukraine could be broken down and that Kiev, as a result, would be given an opportunity to conclude a whole range of economic agreements with Moscow without particularly compromising its interests with regard to political (that is, Black Sea Fleet) matters. But subsequent dramatic developments in Crimea that have caused a curtailment of its autonomy, stripped Yuriy Meshkov of his presidential title, and, most importantly, drew an outburst of emotions in the Russian State Duma have effectively disavowed Oleg Soskovets' accords. Presently, Moscow is making a stern face.

There are very strong doubts, however, that Moscow will have adequate leverage to match so stern an appearance. Indeed, what are its possible levers of pressure on Kiev except for making the air hot with various sorts of statements? The Gazprom joint-stock company will be ordered to turn off the gas valve as retaliation for chronic nonpayments? Gas supply may possibly be halted for a few hours, while Kiev will be advised that gas passing across Ukrainian territory to West Europe is not meant for Ukraine. After which (as has repeatedly been the case) Ukraine will start pumping the gas off illegally. Russia will tighten its stance on Ukrainian debts? Also unlikely. First, there is a third party to this matter — the IMF and the Paris Club, with whom this tightening should be agreed on. Second, and more important (which in the final analysis accounts for the limited nature of all methods of economic pressure on Ukraine), any retaliatory measures hitting the Ukrainian economy cannot but backfire on the Russian economy. One cannot discard a purely political factor either: Destabilization in Ukraine, by definition, cannot be beneficial for Moscow. Of course, there is still another available option of laying its hands on the Black Sea Fleet (gradually or not very much so) unilaterally so as to demand formalization of the actual status quo afterward. But in so doing Moscow should even more frequently recall the desirability of "special friendly relations." The sole result of the meeting on Ukraine, however, could be yet another delay of Yeltsin's visit to Kiev.

Yeltsin Sees Improvement in Ties With Estonia

LD1705124295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1210 GMT 17 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 May — "I think with hope that Russian-Estonian relations, which sometimes were not at their best, are gradually starting to improve," Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in the Kremlin today while receiving credentials from Mart Helme, new Estonian ambassador in the Russian Federation.

"Russia was the first to recognize Estonia's independence; however, at the time we did not meet with a reciprocal attitude," the Russian head of state remarked. "Now the situation is improving, and I hope that there

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will be no differences in our bilateral relations. This is our goal."

The Russian president aiso received credentials from the new ambassadors of Mexico, Uruguay, San Marino, and Paraguay.

Joint Bulgarian Commission Signs Protocol

LD1705215695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1616 GMT 17 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Abrosimov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sofia, 17 May — The results of the third meeting of the inter-governmental Russian-Bulgarian commission for cooperation in trade, economy, science, and technology, which ended here today, set a constructive and businesslike tone for the forthcoming talks between Bulgarian leaders and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who is arriving in Sofia on 18 May.

The results of the three-day session are recorded in a protocol signed by the cochairmen of the commission — Russian Finance Minister Vladimir Panskov and Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister Kiril Tsochev. Commenting on the document at a news conference, they unanimously agreed that the meeting had shown that the two sides had a similar approach to the main aspects of their future cooperation. This is particularly important when discussing issues relating to a liberalization of trade between the two countries, setting up Russian-Bulgarian joint-stock companies and enterprises and settling transport problems. [passage omitted]

Chernomyrdin Leaves for Two-Day Visit to Bulgaria

LD1805055495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0517 GMT 18 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 18 May — Viktor Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation government, has departed by air this morning for a two-day official visit to Bulgaria. [passage omitted]

'Backward-Looking' U.S. Bill on Cuba Denounced

MM1805132595 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 17 May 95 pp 1, 2

[Commentary by Vladimir Shchedrin under the "Topical Commentary" rubric: "Forward into the Past? Remarks on U.S. Bill 'On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity with Cuba'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is a thankless task analyzing and commenting on the laws of a foreign country. Whether a law is good or bad, those who drew it up and approved it have to live by it. As a rule. The exception are those rare occasions when the law concerns the interests of other countries and peoples. The United States has frequently transgressed in this way. The last such incident was on 9 February when Senator J. Helms submitted the bill "On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity With Cuba" for the scrutiny of Congress.

There are disputes going on — what is more, fairly serious ones — because the new bill makes U.S. relations with third countries dependent on their attitude toward the economic embargo on Cuba and on how developed their bilateral trading ties are with Cuba. Personally, the President, Mr. Clinton, is being instructed to end aid to countries subsidizing Cuba or trading with it on a non-commercial basis.

It is unknown what sources of global judicial and diplomatic practices J. Helms used when putting this bill together. But for some reason I recalled the painfully familiar words used by children when arguing: I'm not your friend and I'm going to tell everybody not to be your friend. Probably, these words appeal to the senator. They , incidentally, have a direct bearing on Russia.

In particular, the bill envisages linking U.S. aid for Russia with the withdrawal of military and civilian personnel "from the military and intelligence facilities" in Cuba. At the same time the alleged "allocation by Russia of $200-million as a loan for a radioelectronic center" is condemned. What can be done here? There is no point in arguing and trying to prove to Mr. Helms that $200 million is a crazy sum of money, and no one gave it to anybody "as a loan." If the United States has secret documents about the Russian- Iranian nuclear deal then why shouldn't it have secret information about Russian-Cuban credit relations? Incidentally, I can add free of charge to Mr. Helms' dossier that the aforementioned facility is part of the system for monitoring whether the disarmament treaties are being observed and in this way should be regarded as an element in building confidence rather than mutual suspicion. And moreover compensation for maintaining the facility on foreign territory is made in deliveries of goods and services. And in that alone.

Of course, the topping up of the senator's dossier is in no way connected with maintaining tension in Cuba. It has been considered that this has two sources: the mutual estrangement of Havana and Washington and the stagnation of political life in Cuba. Both these reasons can no longer be considered as absolute today, however much supporters of the new bill would like them to be. Not so long ago, the whole world witnessed how the United States and Cuba settled their differences over

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questions of immigration in a fairly fruitful manner. With the gradual deepening of socioeconomic reforms in Cuba, though their speed and scale may not please everybody, the second of the stated reasons is also beginning to lose any significance of its own. It was those countries which consider dialogue with Cuba to be a means of stimulating change and openness in Cuban society which have turned out to be right.

It is possible that in putting forward his bill, Mr. Helms did not, or was reluctant to, take into consideration these circumstances. But then his bill will only create new problems for everybody and not help to resolve the economic conflict. It is backward-looking, goes back to the beginning of the 30-year embargo against Cuba. One high-ranking official at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the bill as "diplomatic escapism running counter to global trends." Strong words.

In conclusion one more point of view. Not that of diplomats but business people. They look at the situation pragmatically. So in their opinion the United States' clear desire not to allow its competitors to gain a foothold in the promising Cuban market is behind all these laws. The embargo will not go on for ever. If the Americans themselves cannot as yet invest their capital in Cuba for political reasons, it is after all possible to try to prevent others from getting in there. I am not your friend, so nobody can be. For the time being. You see how well the children's "formula for friendship" fits the market!

Shumeyko Discusses Investment With EBRD President

LD1705211895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2051 GMT 17 May 95

[By Lyudmila Yermakova and Vitaliy Makarchev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LONDON, May 18 (Itar-Tass) — "I clearly felt that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD] is 'our' bank not only because Russia is one of its founders and shareholders, but also because the Bank's investment policy plays an important role in the development of the Russian economy," Russian Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko said on Wednesday after a two-hour meeting with EBRD President Jacques de Larosiere.

Shumeyko leads a parliamentary delegation to the talks with the EBRD leaders.

The talks focused on the need to provide a legislative basis in Russian regions to attract foreign investments. Shumeyko said an agreement in principle was reached to send a group of EBRD specialists to the Kaliningrad region to develop the fundamental principles of future laws stimulating investments in Russian regions.

The sides also paid a good deal of attention to oil and gas extraction and processing in Russia. Shumeyko placed the accent on the problems of oil and gas transportation that face Russia.

In addition, the Russian delegation asked the EBRD leaders to consider the possibility of boosting cooperation in Russia's energy sector.

"The EBRD has accumulated considerable experience in the implementation of joint projects with small and medium-size businesses. We support the Bank's orientation and consider it as an important contribution to the efforts to strengthen the foundation of democratic society in Russia," Shumeyko said.

The EBRD was established in 1991 to assist 25 East European countries and CIS states in their transition to a market-oriented economy and private entrepreneurship.

Russia, which is one of the 57 founders of the Bank, accounts for the largest number of its investment projects. The total amount of investments attracted into Russia through the Bank or with its assistance has reached about five billion U.S. dollars.

Shumeyko also suggested setting up a joint parliamentary group to speed up the adoption of key laws vital for creating a favourable investment climate in Russia.

"It is necessary to adopt as soon as possible laws regulating taxes and product sharing at joint ventures. These laws will be critical to investments in the Russian economy by private Western businesses," he said.

Shumeyko stressed that the Federation Council is ready to start working with the State Duma to ensure the earliest possible adoption of two key laws in this sphere.

Japan Seen Shunning Russian Expertise in Gas Probe

MK1805102095 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1, 2

[Report by Andrey Vaganov under the "Versions" rubric: "Chemical Terrorism the Japanese Way. Political Circles in Japan Are Not Interested in Drawing Russian Experts Into International Investigations"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The spring of chemical terrorism continues to be uncoiled in Japan. Meanwhile, if the Japanese Government had duly reacted to international experts' proposals in a timely way, the chemical genie could have probably been kept in the bottle.

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It will be recalled that the chemical attack on 20 March 1995 in Tokyo's subway was by no means the first warning for the Japanese. On 27 June 1994, in the city of Matsumoto an entire residential district was exposed to some yet unknown toxin. Eight persons died and 150 were injured to varying extent. Assessing this incident as an extraordinary event not only on the national, but also on the global scale, in November 1994 Anatoliy Kuntsevich — member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, director of the Ecotoximetry Center, and a consultant to the UN secretary general — made a number of proposals to the Japanese authorities: to set up immediately a governmental commission, including chemists, toxicologists, lawyers, military experts, journalists, and public figures; to uncover possible sources of toxin production; and to publish, at the governmental level, the results of physical and chemical analyses and biochemical findings, as well as medical cases of those who died or were injured. These proposals were ignored. [passage omitted]

"It is necessary to investigate not the 'Russian' but the 'Japanese' trail — that is for sure," Anatoliy Kuntsevich feels certain. "The entire sarin chemism is an integral part of the chemistry of physiologically active organophosphorus compounds used in the development of agents for plant protection. Hundreds of thousands of such compounds are being synthesized worldwide. All reactions producing intermediate compounds for sarin are widely used throughout the world — the more so in Japan," he said. Now, according to Kuntsevich, some interested political forces are playing the Japanese card in the Russian field: "I expect that in the near future, attempts to blame Russia for exporting knowledge in the field of chemical weapons will be growing."

There have indeed been the first indications suggesting that this forecast is justified. The Russian side does not receive information on the results of the investigation under way in Japan. At the same time, U.S. experts, for instance, have been permitted to visit the city of Matsumoto. It has been recently reported that in Australia, "Aum" followers experimented with sarin on animals. How had this substance been delivered to the Green Continent? Why did the Australian Government make no official protest (since, in fact, the proving ground for testing a chemical weapon has been created on the territory of this country)?

Taking the above into consideration, the actions by the Russian Federation General Prosecutor's Office — which, on its own initiative, has started to investigate the possibility of a Russian role in the chemical incidents in Japan — are not quite understandable, either (unless such a request has been received via diplomatic channels from the Japanese side). At any rate, there is the principle of presumption of innocence, too.

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Political Issues

Yeltsin Signs Laws on Presidential Elections, Baykonur

LD1705191095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1647 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) - Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed on Wednesday a number of laws, including a law on presidential elections in Russia.

The amended version of the law was passed by the State Duma on April 21 after the original legislation had been rejected by the Federation Council.

The Duma supported the upper house's proposal to reduce the number of signatures that a candidate or an election bloc has to collect for registration from 1.5 million to one million.

The Duma also made changes, under which the president-elect takes office on the 30th day after the official announcement of the voting results by the Central Electoral Commission. The incumbent president carries on until his successor is sworn in.

Yeltsin also signed a law on the ratification of the agreement to lease the Baykonur cosmodrome signed between the governments of Russia and Kazakhstan. Under the agreement, the cosmodrome will be leased to Russia for a period of 20 years.

The president also signed a law on the ratification of the agreement on general terms of and mechanism for support of the development of industrial cooperation between enterprises and industries of the CIS states and the protocol on the implementation of the above agreement.

All these laws were passed by the State Duma in April and approved by the Federation Council on May 4.

Signs Laws on Education, Servicemen in Chechnya

MK1705122095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Boris Yeltsin Signs Two Laws"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation president has signed the law "On Preserving the Status of State and Municipal Educational Establishments and a Moratorium on Their Privatization," passed earlier by the State Duma. Boris Yeltsin has also signed a law extending to servicemen of the Russian Army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Chechnya the validity of the law on additional compensation to servicemen carrying out assignments in emergency situations and armed conflicts.

To Review Results of VE-Day in TV Address

LD1705141395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1218 GMT 17 May 95

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin said he will sum up the results of the VE-Day celebrations in Russia in a televised address early next week.

"In the first half of next week I will speak on television about the results of the ceremonies to observe the 50th anniversary of the Victory," Yeltsin told foreign ambassadors as he accepted their credentials in the Kremlin on Wednesday.

"I am going to talk about the steps that the leadership of the country intends to take to provide further support for the veterans and invalids of the Great Patriotic War," he said.

'Democratic' Representatives Urge Campaign Collaboration

MM1705134395 Moscow TRUD in Russian 17 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Time To Unite, It Is Said"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Representatives of democratic parties and movements are proposing that "champions of Russian citizens' freedom, democracy, and well-being engage in joint action in the election campaign now under way." This appeal is contained in a message to Yegor Gaydar, leader of the Russia's Democratic Choice party, and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, leader of the Yabloko movement, which expresses approval of their joint statement on the need to pool efforts, and the hope that the statement will be officially ratified by decisions of the leading organs of the party and movement.

We confirm, the document says, our readiness to make efforts to secure collaboration among all democratic forces with the aim of setting up an association of them. We are certain that maximum success will be achieved only by setting up an appropriate organizational structure and putting forward a single list for the national electoral district and joint candidates in single-seat districts. The creation of such an association "will halt the fragmentation of democratic forces."

The message was signed by V. Podoprigora, Yu. Chernichenko, M. Salye. K. Borovoy, L. Ponomarev, and G. Yakunin.

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Split Develops Between Yabloko, Gaydar's Party

MM1805100295 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 2

[Report by Sergey Chugayev: "Emerging Alliance Between Gaydar and Yavlinskiy Irrevocably Split"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is possible that in the next few days the Political Council of the "Democratic Choice of Russia" [DCR] party will adopt a decision forbidding Ye. Gaydar, the head of the party, from all political consultations with G. Yavlinskiy, leader of the "Yabloko" party. Thus, presumably, hopes for a preelection alliance between the two largest democratic associations will be buried once and for all.

The reason for the DCR's serious decision is a number of television interviews given by G. Yavlinskiy in which he unexpectedly delivered harsh criticism both of the DCR and Ye. Gaydar personally. Moreover, he did this after consultations with Gaydar on joint actions in the election campaign.

S. Yushenkov, member of the DCR Political Council, informed IZVESTIYA's correspondent that Yavlinskiy's statements came as a surprise to the party leadership. Only at the end of last week "Yabloko's" leader gave clear signals on the possibility of negotiations. However, later Yavlinskiy behaved amazingly inconsistently: First he affirmed the possibility of an alliance, and the next day denied such a possibility; then he held talks with Gaydar, and on the same day criticized his partner. In Yushenkov's opinion, at the basis of this inconsistency lies the pressure which members of the "Yabloko" faction are exerting on their leader, fearing for their places on the possible coalition election list.

Meanwhile, the DCR leaders were, as far as is known, ready to make serious sacrifices for the sake of concluding an alliance with "Yabloko." In particular, party representatives of the caliber of Ye. Gaydar, S. Yushenkov, and B. Zolotukhin expressed their consent to leave politics if their participation in the planned democratic bloc was considered a hindrance to attracting votes. However, even this step led nowhere.

One of the major results of this profound rift in relations within the democratic camp should be the DCR's inevitable drift toward the "Russia Is Our Home" bloc, although DCR representatives stated that there are no plans to form a bloc, but close cooperation with governors who support reforms and democracy is already predetermined. The consequences could be even more profound. In particular, representatives of the DCR party leadership do not rule out that, in the event of G. Yavlinskiy and B. Yeltsin getting through to the second round of the presidential elections, preference will be given to the president.

Gaydar Presents Party's Economic Program

BR1705130295 Madrid EL MUNDO in Spanish 16 May 95 pp 4-5

[Article by Russia's Democratic Choice Chairman Yegor Gaydar: "Russia and Economic Recovery"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Recession is coming to an end in Russia and the tide may turn to our advantage if we do not block it with clumsy mistakes and if, at the same time, we do everything that is needed to achieve lasting political and social stability. In order to bring about this stability it is essential for the advantages of a market economy to benefit not only a small group of millionaires but above all our very broad middle class, which is unable to bear the effects of galloping inflation

Recent opinion polls show that the radical reforms needed to establish a genuine market economy are unreservedly supported by only 5 percent of Russia's leading businessmen. Paradoxically, intellectuals, who in general lead a more precarious life, back these measures more resolutely.

This remarkable situation can be easily explained if we look at the background of the Russian "new rich": Many of them originate in the old bureaucratic circles or are closely associated with the present-day state bureaucracy.

It is not surprising, therefore, that they feel comfortable and happy with the bureaucratic type of capitalism currently prevalent in Russia and that, therefore, they do not wish any change to take place.

Intellectuals, on the contrary, are fully aware that the merging of business and administrative structures in our semi-private and semi-governmental economy, and the fact that our market is in the hands of the bureaucracy, are only serving the purpose of fostering corruption and the transformation of the bureaucrats into Mafia-like crooks. Naturally, the educated part of the Russian community is placing its hopes in a gradual transition from the current bureaucratic market to a genuinely free and open one, that is, a modern and socially aware form of capitalism and an open society.

For Russia, these are vital objective needs as well as being categorical imperatives on the threshold of the 21st century, unless we want a country dominated by organized crime and with old- fashioned social and economic structures.

It should be noted that our ruling bureaucracy has somewhat changed since 1992. To begin with, by

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warning that "our country needs a market but not a chaotic oriental bazar" it obtained consensus for the acceptance of a rigorous and frugal financial policy, which it is now implementing with the necessary effectiveness.

If the current financial policy is pursued, there are good reasons to expect an economic upturn within a year or two, since it is apparent that recession is coming to an end.

These are the prospects with which Russia is approaching the general and presidential elections planned for December and the coming year respectively.

As opposed to what a number of parties are advocating, in my view the elections should not be postponed, because the people would be furious at being deprived of the possibility of expressing their opinions through a vote on the planned dates.

If social unrest takes place, the democratic government's legal foundations will be undermined. Those politicians such as Vladimir Shumeyko, the president of the Russian Federation Council (one of the two houses of parliament), who want to cancel the elections, allegedly for the sake of stability, will never achieve the latter in this way.

Russia is a ship that foundered near the entrance to the harbor, Winston Churchill said once referring to the 1917 revolution. Although to a lesser extent, we are currently running the same risk. We are in sight of a harbor which is safe, albeit not perfect.

The only system which does not rest on the tips of bayonets is a legitimately and democratically elected system. No democracy can dispense with systematic elections.

The platform of our party, Russia's Democratic Choice, is essentially based on the need for the country to experience a peaceful transition from a bureaucratic state to a civil society. Our aim is to strengthen and muster all the democratic forces, whatever the differences between them may be. We want a free market and private property, including land ownership, to be guaranteed. We also need a far-reaching construction program to build homes, and I believe this can become a powerful vehicle for the Russian economy, as railway construction was in the 19th century.

Our aim is an efficient and streamlined state which will promote the formation of a middle class capable of preparing Russia for post-industrial civilization, and with an adequate priority system.

We believe that, holding such aims, we can objectively agree and join forces with one section of the political forces currently supporting President Boris Yeltsin. This section of the ruling elite has direct links with the economy, and is now showing itself to be open to liberal tendencies and keeping its distance from its former nationalist and populist allies, who were pushing the country toward the abyss of inflation anmd political adventurism.

We have now covered the most difficult part of our journey and it is now time for Russia to reap the harvest of 1992 — that difficult year which marked the beginning of reform.

As soon as inflation stops, the enormous amounts of capital accumulated through commerce, financial speculation, and in the raw materials sector will flow into production. A generalized growth of the economy will take place by itself as long as we guide this influx of money into the right channels.

In the social sphere, the times of want will give way to an era of consolidation of the new middle classes made up of genuine Russians who will work honestly within the market and will not engage in unlawful business activities verging on banditry. This will enable an increasingly wealthy community to come to the aid of the poor and those who are too weak to fend for themselves.

Rybkin, Chernomyrdin Blocs' Strategies Assessed

MK1705111095 Moscow ROSSIYA in Russian 17-23 May 95 No 13, (Signed to press 16 May) pp 1-2

[Report by Chief Editor Aleksandr Drozdov under the general headline: "A Prefab Apartment Building Is My Fortress," in the "Weather for Tomorrow" column: "Center Is Calling You!"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The game should be joined by tough pragmatists (or cynics), free of moral-ideological inhibitions. In this context the election formula reads as follows: If the two new blocs are seen to be in the lead well before the elections, then the elections can go ahead; if the opponents have clearly better chances, then elections may not be held.

There are a thousand reasons for canceling the elections. But even two will be enough: "Salvation of the Fatherland" and "Do not meddle in our work." These causes at the same time make up the essence of the prime ministerial bloc's program.

Rybkin's task is far more subtle and delicate, although he personally needs elections just as badly as does Chernomyrdin. But he, as an honest and presumably responsible person, wants to ensure stability for the whole Duma. Therefore he faithfully goes through

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all the motions of election preparations, although the political leaders and their groups, who should in theory have become the buttress of the left of center bloc, have already distanced themselves from him. The speaker is absolutely unperturbed by this (I can state with a full sense of responsibility: He is showing traces of a Khasbulatov adamancy). And he will continue to be unperturbed because the left of center ball has been rolled precisely in order to down the figures which have become an eyesore, and to lure from the ramshackle factional stables the most capable, ambitious Duma public, which has been sitting too long on the back benches.

It is known from Duma sources that Rybkin has begun a personal review of the "second political echelon." It is not so big. The first to be wooed were the chairmen of Duma committees who have made the greatest contribution to lawmaking: S. Glazyev, on economic reform; M. Zadornov, on budget and finances; K. Zatulin, on CIS affairs; S. Kalashnikov, on labor and social welfare; and V. Lukin, on international affairs. Add here also a few people from among the independent Duma deputies. Zadornov and Zatulin are expected to team up with the speaker without any particular problem because they have long been acting independently of their primordial parties and factions. Zatulin is demonstrating the greatest propensity to drifting, which is on the verge of becoming proverbial. Whatever could be said about the Komsomol, those who knew how to take advantage of it have learned a good deal.

It is not so easy to find the right way to approach the other pair: Glazyev-Kalashnikov. Among the Duma committee leaders they have perhaps the highest stature. Glazyev, who worked as minister and departed quite respectably, has now been acclaimed as "man of the year." Kalashnikov, sources in the government maintain, has already received an invitation from Chernomyrdin to take up the post of a vice premier (Yu. Yarov's), provided Kalashnikov leaves the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia]. The deal did not materialize; the LDPR member refused to stage a demonstrative rupture, although he keeps the requisite distance from Zhirinovskiy. It is important that Glazyev and Kalashnikov have no apparent motives for not wanting elections. Their professional work in the Duma has made them unrecognizable to the 1995 voter. I am not even talking about the fact that all documents on economic and social problems, originating from the Duma, the presidential staff, or the government unmistakably bear their fingerprints. Especially Kalashnikov's, and in this context it is interesting to know which role party guidelines have played in the committee head's performance. They say, however, that Zhirinovskiy is bitterly jealous of nearly all laws and normative enactments pertaining to the social sphere which were developed in the Kalashnikov committee. It is indicative that against the backdrop of the Labor and Social Support Committee's performance the Council on Social Policy under the president, headed by the blooming Pamfilova, has languished.

Therefore Rybkin certainly needs Glazyev as leader of the Democratic Party of Russia, and Kalashnikov as leader of his own association which he reportedly intends to create under the modest shingle: "People's Prosperity."

Are we going to witness a small split in the LDPR (Zh.)? Or maybe even in Yabloko, if the speaker manages to play on the ambitions of Lukin, who is rather perceptible to situational impacts. The ruling authorities today are actively maintaining the thesis that Yavlinskiy has no future with respect to a whole number of formal parameters.

In the end, a very interesting crowd could gather around Rybkin and Chernomyrdin, if only the potential recruits realize that the Center is where the power is.

'Left-Wing' Electoral Bloc Applies for Registration

LD1705185095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) - The leaders of Russia's new Concord movement, headed by State Duma Chairman Ivan Rybkin, on Monday appealed to the Justice Ministry for registration, leader of the Free Russia People's Party Vasiliy Lipitskiy told Interfax on Wednesday.

He said the movement, allowing both collective and individual membership, includes heads of the legislative councils of Voronezh, Kostroma and Ivanovo regions.

Lipitskiy said Concord is part of an as-yet to be formed left-wing election alliance which also includes his own party and the Socialist Workers Party (led by Lyudmila Vartazarova), the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) led by Valeriy Shmakov and others.

However, FNPR representatives speaking yesterday denied the speculation that they sought to join the Rybkin alliance.

Lipitskiy said that leaders of the Russian Youth Union (RSM) meeting Rybkin on Wednesday reaffirmed plans to enter into the left-of-center alliance at a meeting with Rybkin on Wednesday. The question of using RSM's

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office as the headquarters of a would be alliance was also discussed.

Rybkin himself in an interview with Interfax has declined to speak about the future of the new coalition and his role in it apart from saying "it is early days yet" to do so. He said that under Russian legislation, it is the justice ministry which decides whether or not to register a new movement which cannot be registered as an election bloc by the central election commission until after presidential endorsement of the new election law.

State Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin took part in the opening conference of the Concord movement in Moscow on Monday, a parliamentary source told Interfax.

The forum involved representatives from more than 40 regions, most of them the heads of regional parliaments, he said. Rybkin's aide Nikolay Sakharov was elected to chair the executive of the new movement.

The Agrarian Party of Russia has repeatedly said Rybkin would run on its ticket in the December election. APR leader Mikhail Lapshin on Wednesday said that a dirty game was under way to try to hurt Rybkin's reputation.

Rybkin To Lead New Movement

MK1805074095 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 May 95 p 2

[Unattributed report in the "In Brief" column: "New Movements Have Been Created"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 15 May in the "Oktyabrskaya-2" hotel, a constituent meeting of the "Accord" [Soglasiye] public movement's organizing committee was held, sources in the State Duma said yesterday. The organizing committee elected a Political Board, including, among others, the chairmen of Voronezh and Kostroma Oblasts' legislative assemblies. Ivan Rybkin was elected the movement's chairman and Nikolay Sakharov, an aide to the State Duma chairman, was elected head of the movement's Executive Board. "Accord's" organizing committee meeting was not attended by representatives of the Russian Social Democratic Union, the Socialist Workers' Party, the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, and the "Union of Realists," with whom the State Duma chairman has lately discussed the possibility of creating a center- left bloc.

Kozyrev To Remain Independent of Electoral Blocs

LD1705185995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1644 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: Reports by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev told journalists in the Interfax Moscow headquarters Tuesday [16 May] that he plans to stay away from electoral blocs.

He said that if he runs for parliament again, he will be an independent candidate as in the preceding elections.

Kozyrev represents the Murmansk Region in the State Duma, the Russian parliament's lower house.

He wished Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's "Our Home Is Russia" [OHIR] movement every success.

In Kozyrev's words, the OHIR program sounds good. He expressed the hope that the goals of stability and economic prosperity of Russia declared in the program will be achieved.

Agrarian Leader Criticizes Pro-Yeltsin Blocs

LD1705193295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1901 GMT 17 May 95

[By Lyudmila Alexandrova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Mikhail Lapshin, leader of Russia's Agrarian Party, bitterly criticised today two new political blocs created by the Russian President to attract votes of the centrist and centre-left electorate.

Speaking to reporters, Lapshin branded Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's bloc "Our Home Is Russia" as "a party of power, a party of the ruling nomenklatura, a party of indolent bourgeois."

It is a party of "bosses who spare no effort to keep their posts and privileges," Lapshin went on saying.

Speaking about another new centre-left election bloc, reportedly to be headed by Ivan Rybkin, Duma speaker and a member of the Agrarian Party himself, Lapshin expressed the confidence that Rybkin "will stay with the Agrarians," referring to some public statements of the latter.

The Agrarian leader reiterated his party's resoluteness to go to the December elections independently, not even to form a coalition with Communists, its most friendly faction in the current legislature.

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Lapshin Hails Spurning of Chernomyrdin Bloc

MM1805112495 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 18 May 95 p 3

[Agrarian Party of Russia Duma Faction Press Service report: "Sticking With the Agrarians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mikhail Lapshin, chairman of the APR [Agrarian Party of Russia], regards it as a manifestation of civic courage that his party colleagues Aleksandr Zaveryukha, vice premier, and Aleksandr Nazarchuk, minister of agriculture and food, have refused to join the government election bloc recently transformed into the "Russia Is Our Home" movement. "I never doubted for a moment that they would behave any other way in this situation," the Agrarian leader stated.

As before, A. Zaveryukha and A. Nazarchuk, who are State Duma deputies from the APR, link their parliamentary future with the election association of peasant forces with the same name — the "Agrarian Party of Russia" — as in the 1993 elections."

On 26 May there will be an APR plenum which will examine the question of the APR election platform and the party's tasks in the 1995 election campaign.

Zyuganov Cited on Possible Allies, Relations With LDPR

MM1805110995 Moscow PRAVDA ROSSII in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Report by Viktor Sidorin: "Gennadiy Zyuganov on the Subject of the Communist Party's Allies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gennadiy Zyuganov, member of the State Duma Council and leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, devoted the time between the two May public holidays to mixing with the people in Murmansk Oblast who catch and process fish, repair ships, and protect Russia's northern sea borders. He also conducted a live dialogue with viewers on oblast television. He said that, as throughout Russia, "market" troubles have also affected the bulk of northerners. The Communist deputy expressed solidarity with many of their demands.

He was critical of the Russian Federation president's decision to create two election blocs, believing that the government has enough problems of its own as it is. And if there is a wish to get involved in building parties, cabinet members should quit their posts. What is being done is against the law. Gennadiy Zyuganov considers that the president is a completely spent force.

The Communists advocate a bloc of state-patriotic forces whose foundation could comprise the Communist Party, the Agrarian Party, the Socialist Party, trade unions, and commodity producers in all forms of ownership. The Communists work with [vzaymodeystvuyet v rabochem poryadke] all parties, including the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia]. "But the LDPR leader has one peculiarity," Gennadiy Zyuganov stressed. "You agree something with him at 9 in the morning, and by 10 he has already revised his position. Zhirinovskiy supports Yeltsin in practically everything."

Communists Seen Ill-Prepared for Elections

MM1705123495 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 16 May 95 p 2

[Article by Doctor of Historical Sciences Aleksey Malashenko, ROSSIYSKYE VESTI Expert: "Polemic. The Feeble Shoots of the Tree of Ideology. The March Reveries of the CPRF Leaders"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At the end of March a low-circulation Communist newspaper published the Communist Party of the Russian Federation [CPRF] document "Let Us Return Russia to the Path of People's Power and Socialism," which had the subhead "On the Party's Ideological and Mass Political Work in Present-Day Conditions."

I found that irresistible, of course, and I instinctively set about reading this mass political work. But as I read through it I suddenly realized that this material, although old-fashioned in form, was exceptionally interesting in its content. First, it shows clearly how Communists regard the different strata of society, in other words, you and me; and second, it is clear how they regard themselves in the runup to the elections.

There can be no doubting the sincerity of the document's authors. Surprisingly it contains hardly any of the verbiage about "the Russian spirit," which is mandatory for the "new Left," nor does it make any claims to refined popular-patriotic language. It is permeated throughout with longing for their radiant past and fear of a dark future.

I pictured to myself a modest party committee complete with a glass ash tray, a portrait of Ilich, and some tired, angry people needing to organize counterpropaganda courses as well as find the time to get their ration....

So how do the Communists from the CPRF regard the various strata of Russian society? Let me say right away that in their mass political work they completely ignore what is now known as "national capital." [passage omitted]

The Communists intend to launch political work almost exclusively among "working people on kolkhozes and

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sovkhozes which have preserved their status and reorganized agricultural enterprises." It would be good, of course, if the place of those kolkhoz members and sovkhoz workers who were missing from the fields while that work was being carried out were taken by representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia, plant workers and engineers....

Incidentally, the hard-working ones should have been sent to the countryside for reeducation long ago, because the working class "is split by syndicalist politics into detachments isolated from one another" and its strike activity has been exceptionally localized in character and designed to achieve aims far removed from the common workers' interest. "It is hardly... possible to reach all the workers at the same time."

But the situation can be remedied. To that end the proletariat must display its "common workers' interest." And the "driving force behind this display could be the idea that the workers' class character is expressed not simply in securing a pay raise but in preserving and recreating the conditions for their expanded reproduction, including the production of worker children...." Did Richard Kosolapov, former chief editor of the quite sensible but now defunct journal KOMMUNIST, really not have the time to apply his expert hand to the party document manuscript?

But whereas the ideologists of the CPRF still feel it necessary to treat the proletariat (the former hegemonists, after all) and the peasantry with caution, they have plenty to say about the intelligentsia. I quote: "The intelligentsia cannot see the wood for the trees"; "there is ideological confusion in the heads of many intellectuals"; "the intelligentsia is standing in a vast bog split between the patriotic and the anti-patriotic...: The former constituted the nucleus of the bourgeois counterrevolution, the latter supported it unthinkingly."

My first desire was to create a fuss. Then I became afraid. After all, it is the "confusion" in my head that G. Zyuganov, secretary of the CPRF Central Committee, R. Kosolapov, and retired General A. Makashov (the one who likes to yell abuse through megaphones) are talking about. I am the one they are planning to educate. I remembered the photograph of columns of German prisoners that was published in DEN (now renamed ZAVTRA) captioned "This is what will happen to the Democrats." Generally speaking I am not a particularly outstanding democrat, but to be educated that way? And by Makashov.... [passage omitted]

The Communists of the nineties are making serious efforts to get to grips with their internal problems. But they are not having outstanding success there. There are two tendencies within the party, one of which — the radical tendency — is urging an immediate "final and determined battle" to overthrow the "rotten regime." The supporters of the second tendency proceed from the same premise — the "corruption of the present powers" — to assert that "it will soon collapse of its own accord even if the Communists... do nothing."

In the opinion of Zyuganov and his supporters the truth lies somewhere in between: Victory is inevitable, of course, but it will have to be achieved through struggle. Both in the Duma and on the street, furthermore. (The current debate on this theme is so reminiscent of the uproar within the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party [RSDWP] 70 years ago [as published] between the illegal activity of the "otzovists" [supporters of the policy favoring the recall of deputies from the Duma after 1905 and withdrawal from legal forms of political activity] and the appeals for an exclusively parliamentary struggle made by the "liquidationists" [advocates of a policy condemned as leading to the dissolution of the RSDWP, although in this case he probably means the liquidationists from the right ("sprava") who rejected illegal means of activity in favor of legal methods, rather than the liquidationists from the left ("sleva") who denied the value of legal means available to political parties].

However, it is not this almost academic polemic about where the struggle should be waged — in parliament or on the public square — that is at the center of the disagreements within the CPRF and is giving its leader a headache. The question is whom to adopt as an ally.

The CPRF is not a simple party. It dreams of being the "vanguard" but at the same time not the vanguard of the "old ladies with umbrellas." The Zyuganovites are afraid of "sectarianism, khvostizm [being led by events rather than directing them], and Zhirinovskiyism." They want to be radicals but at the same time they want to look oh so respectable. But how are all these things to be combined in practice? It is becoming increasingly difficult to deliver polite speeches in parliament while collaborating out on the street with Working Russia, let alone the "little Stalinists" and the quasifascist national extremists. Especially since super- radicals of the Anpilov variety simply do not want an unduly appealing Zyuganov, who would be a dangerous rival were he to launch his "mass political work" in earnest.

Anpilov's shadow hangs ominously over the CPRF, scaring off those who are only moderately dissatisfied with the present authorities but who at the same time are afraid of a howling mob carrying red flags. Zyuganov constantly has to choose. But how can he choose when there is no unity in the CPRF camp and part of the hierarchy itself is hankering after the style of Working

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Russia, which is clearly partly derived from "Let Us Take Russia Back....

Finally, in addition to the attitude to the radicals, the CPRF has another question which is no less serious: how to combine the role of defenders of national interests with the markedly class-based and international character of Marxist ideology and practice? Zyuganov is a consistent man and as such is surely heartily sickened by Prokhanov's philistine mixture of Leninism and nationalism, which the ZAVTRA editor himself admitted in conversation with Anpilov a year ago was somewhat "eclectic."

Zyuganov remains above all a Communist, and the class principle for him is fundamentally more important than the national principle. And it is primarily from the viewpoint of social contradictions that the CPRF's main ideological document examines the prospects for the Russian Federation's development. The national aspect of this question is strictly secondary. That is demonstrated at least by what I would describe as the way he is freely committed to the theme of the socialist option, which is supposed to "correspond to the trends of the world process and the cultural-historical characteristics of the Russian people and the other peoples of the Russian Federation and the USSR." A fine stew of Gorbachevian pan-human values and a pale shadow of the Russian national identity!

Russian Communists react sensitively to the negative attitude shown toward them by some of the most prestigious figures in the nationalist opposition, including people like Yuriy Vlasov or Archbishop Ioann of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, whose articles "always or almost always have an anti-Communist thrust."

One final blow — a body blow delivered by those who, in the language of the CPRF ideologists, are trying to "bind the present Kremlin bosses with the Communist movement." No matter what you do, likening them to one another in this way is bound to offend both sides. And it is mainly Zyuganov's rivals (overt and covert) from SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, PRAVDA, ZAVTRA, and so forth who are engaged in this act of "binding."

On the eve of the elections, of course, the wrangling within the Communist camp will die down. It is largely due to Zyuganov's sound judgment and intellectualism (at least when compared with Anpilov and Makashov) that the CPRF remains the most attractive force in the Communist movement. But after the elections the paths of the moderate and radical Communists will most probably diverge. And of course the barrier between the "Zyuganovites" and the nationalists will become even higher.

The CPRF today has too many extremely diverse principles and will have to waive some of them. And the party will have to begin taking stock of its principles before the elections to which the Kremlin has so boldly agreed.

The ruling circles' recent decision on the creation of two massive blocs — one left center, the other right center — seems perfectly reasonable although the success of this venture will depend entirely on the quality of its execution. What really matters is whether it proves possible to pour "new wine" into old bottles. In any event, the future rivals from these two "superparties," including the Communists from the CPRF, will have to modify their strategy in various areas including the sphere of mass political work, which in the present situation is essentially nothing other than an election campaign.

...Those who have read Lenin's "April Theses" will recall their revolutionary fervor. The leader of the future revolution played for the highest stakes. The style of "Let Us Take Russia Back to the Path of People's Power..." is restrained, somewhat sluggish, and is marked by a sense of grievance at a society which does not understand the CPRF and of barely concealed discontent with its allies. The impression that you get is that at the moment the Russian Communists are not prepared for the social explosion that they themselves have predicted or for a no-lose electoral game.

Gorbachev Interviewed on Presidential Campaign

LD1705162695 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to radio Deutsche Welle which quotes an Austrian newspaper, the former president of the USSR has decided to run for president. Our correspondent Vladimir Mishnev got in touch with Mikhail Sergeyevich [Gorbachev] himself to find out from the horse's mouth whether this is true.

[Begin recording] [Mishnev] Have you really decided to run for president?

[Gorbachev] No, I have not yet decided, although I do not rule out that I might take it.

[Mishnev] So the reports by various radio stations are not quite true?

[Gorbachev] What they show is that I am being increasingly involved in all the things connected with the elections. I do, indeed, believe that we need free democratic elections, and all the people worried about the situation in the country - from the electorate to politicians - must do everything in their power to ensure that the elections are democratic and free.

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[Mishnev] The other day a new coalition - Our Home Is Russia - was set up. What is your attitude toward it?

[Gorbachev] I heard on the radio today that Stroyev, who took part in setting up this organization, is very pleased with it, because he has been promised 10 billion rubles for Orel region. That is how people are recruiting supporters. I think that this is not the best reference for this organization. The electorate cannot be bought. I am not calling into doubt the desire by the current authorities to hold on to power, and to the policy which is in their interests and in the interests of the circles supporting them. They are now ready to stake everything. But the logic of development of the situation in Russia is demanding a change in policy, a new policy. They cannot provide it and are trying to hold on to the old one. Yet people no longer trust this policy. Therefore I do not understand how they are going to carry out this policy. Perhaps without people?

[Mishnev] Can there be any circumstances under which you would act jointly with them, as one front, as it were.

[Gorbachev] Yes, if when creating this organization they had said: Yes, we can see that the situation has come to a crisis point, and we now must change our policy. This is what we are proposing to change, etc, etc. But you know, even when they begin to make statements like this, one will have to look very carefully. Because all this might well be just a trick but they have not yet come to that, anyway.

[Mishnev] But have you received any invitations?

[Gorbachev] No. If they had not invited me to the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the victory over fascism, they would hardly invite me now. I am a dangerous man. [end recording]

'The New Russia' Movement Officially Registered

LD1705115295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1129 GMT 17 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — "The Russian Justice Ministry registered on Tuesday a new socio-political movement, called 'The New Russia.' It is headed by former Vice-Premier and Chairman of the State Property Committee Vladimir Polevanov. The movement has more than fifty regional branches," says a statement released by its press service in the State Duma today.

The document also says that in Polevanov's opinion the movement's main purpose should be to help create a democratic law-governed state, to effectively develop the society, which will guarantee every citizen a prosperous, fair, and safe life.

At the present time, the statement notes, the movement is conducting consultations with several new election blocs to establish interaction with them. However, it bluntly declares that it will by no means cooperate with the "Our Home — Russia" election bloc.

Central Electoral Commission Chairman Interviewed

MM1805102395 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 May 95 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Report by Aleksandr Maslennikov of "roundtable interview" with Nikolay Ryabov, chairman of the Russian Central Electoral Commission: "Nikolay Ryabov: We Preach Only One Loyalty — To the Law"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although there are still four months left to the official start of the campaign for the State Duma deputies' elections, the mass media of the most diverse orientations have already made elections topics central in their items.

We invited Nikolay Timofeyevich Ryabov, chairman of the Russian Federation Central Electoral Commission, to impart his views on the subject at an editorial office "roundtable."

[Ryabov] I am glad to have the opportunity to meet with the collective of one of the most influential newspapers in Russia which we view as a very important source of information for the country's population.

The Central Electoral Commission is in principle indifferent to the departmental or party bias of a particular mass media organ with which we have to work. The Central Electoral Commission is a supraparty organ which does not belong to any power structure. For us just one loyalty is important — loyalty to the law and to the Russian Federation Constitution which regulates the course of the preparation and holding of the election campaign.

Nevertheless, we have a special relationship with ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA. It is the official government organ and it is on it that we count as the main medium for transmitting official information to the country's population about the forthcoming elections and it is through ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA that we try constantly to inform readers about all questions which arise. Who should know better than the newspapermen which are the most acute and topical questions. So let us begin our talk with these questions.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] Many of our readers wonder what an "election movement" is?

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[Ryabov] A more complex question than it might initially appear. The point is that so far there is no such concept in our legislation. There are "public movements" but not "election movements." The only law adopted by the State Duma mentions public movements without personal membership in them, that is without the main, fundamental difference.

It is clear that a specific law on parties and movements has long been needed. But neither our previous parliament nor the present one has yet been able to adopt such a law. Will-nilly we have to use the existing formulation, although everyone admits it is rather artificial. Under it even three people can create a movement, or it could be done by 300,000, perhaps. Understandably, they cannot compete on an equal basis.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] And how many movements of this kind are there in our country today?

[Ryabov] There are already 256 registered.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] And will they all be able to take part in the forthcoming elections?

[Ryabov] According to the existing situation a public association registered by the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice six months before the elections can take part in them. Count back from the date of the elections — 17 December — and you get 17 June. Anyone who manages to register by then in accordance with all the rules will take part in the election struggle on the party lists.

We expect a tough election struggle. The facts which we observe every day attest to the power and attraction of the authorities. This campaign will be more active, we believe. We are preparing correspondingly for this, although there is no basic package of election laws. A targeted federal program has already been adopted to enhance the legal knowledge of the participants in the election process. The center for training in election technologies created in Moscow has started to operate everywhere. Similar centers are starting to work in several components of the Federation. Our representatives have just returned from Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk. Preparatory work is already in full swing everywhere there.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] What specific laws are still lacking for carrying out a proper election campaign?

[Ryabov] Virtually all of them. The only law which has already come into force is the law on basic guarantees of electoral rights. The law on the election of State Duma deputies has been adopted but has not been approved by the Federation Council. We are waiting above all for a federal law on the introduction of changes and additions to the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Criminal Code and the RSFSR Code on administrative violations. This act, albeit only temporary (it will operate until the adoption of the main Russian Federation code) both facilitates and toughens in very many ways the organization and holding of the election campaign.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] Will our parliamentarians have time to prepare all the necessary laws? How much time do they have left?

[Ryabov] The method of counting down the deadline is the same. In accordance with the Constitution elections must be scheduled at least four months before they are held. Let us add this figure to the officially announced date. The result is that the entire package of legislative acts must be prepared no later than 17 August. On that day the election campaign will officially be opened. So that although there is not much time there is some. We can manage. We are sure that all necessary laws will be ready. Talk that our deputies do not want to adopt these laws in order to extend their term as deputies is in my view nothing more than the political speculation of unscrupulous demagogues.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] But you must agree that a substantial stumbling block has been placed in the protracted dispute over how many deputies to elect on the basis of residential areas and how many according to the party lists. Here you cannot explain everything merely by the political insinuations of the opponents of the document that has been prepared....

[Ryabov] But I do not claim that the version approved by the deputies is close to perfection. There is the president's position. There is the opinion of the members of the Federation Council. I believe that the proportion suggested by the president was dictated by a long-term view of the country's political development. I do not rule out the possibility that some people think differently. But nonetheless the law must be adopted. It is better to have an imperfect law, in order to rectify it later, than to have no law at all. As far as I know the president is of the same opinion.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] In your opinion what is the main shortcoming of the proposed draft law on the election of State Duma deputies?

[Ryabov] The fact that some candidate deputies have the opportunity to run simultaneously in single-seat districts and on party lists. That is discriminating against those who preferred to operate only through the electoral district. Disputes around this point are natural. But if this point of law is rectified it will be a question not of repealing the entire draft law but merely of repealing

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one of its clauses. So far there is more speculation around this than there are businesslike proposals. I think that here it is more of a case of them having already become vital to some of our politicians.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] In your opinion what other pitfalls and obstacles could appear on the path of our election legislation?

[Ryabov] They have already appeared. You remember the past elections. At the time there were stories mainly over the allegedly incorrect counting of votes. But people made a noise and forgot about it. This talk erupted with new force when there was discussion of counting votes at the referendum. The count was said to be falsified and the people were being massively misled. Everything had to be replayed and the constitution deemed illegitimate. Now people have begun to shout with new force about the possibility that the forthcoming elections will be falsified.

Here it is always those who have not looked at election legislation who are obviously shouting. Last time we were accused of concealing the results of the vote on the party lists in the rayons and cities. But we simply did not have that information since commissions were not created at rayon and city level. This was not envisaged by the statute on the 1993 elections.

Now this information has obviously been required by someone and the question is being brooded over. But they are looking in the wrong direction. They should turn to their own party leaders, to those with whom we coordinated all the protocols, without whose agreement we did not sign documents. When we had heard their opinions and recorded their consent, then we signed.

Attempts are being made in advance to accuse us of falsifying the results of the future elections despite even the fact that it was we, the Central Electoral Commission, who were the initiators of the law I have already mentioned regarding changes and additions to the Criminal Code. They should at least take a look at it. It actually says that responsibility should be enhanced, that culprits should be made answerable, fined, removed from work.... For what? For that very thing, for any attempt in some respect to cheat, to misrepresent, to distort, to influence, and so forth.

We are often accused of some kind of arbitrary behavior which is allegedly allowed by the electoral commission. Sometimes these accusations come from quite well known politicians. But they are always unfounded. Well, find and show me the article of the law which we have arbitrarily distorted. No, no one has even once found or shown us such an article.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] But what about abuses and distortions during the elections to the Krasnodar kray Duma about which the press made such a noise?

[Ryabov] A very indicative example. The elections there were held later than in other places and were completely open to all interested politicians. You could go, take a look, and check up. Colossal opportunities for public monitoring were provided. No one hid anything from anyone.

The elections took place, all protocols were signed, the polling stations were closed, and the participants and organizers went home. It was all done peacefully, no complaints, no statements, not demands. A couple of days passed by. And then a flood of the most varied complaints poured out. Where did this flood come from if not a single violation was recorded at the polling stations? But that is what democracy is like in our country, it seems. Those dissatisfied with the results which had been obtained sat at home for a couple of days and thought over the situation and... went to find "eyewitnesses" on the principle of "a little bird told me." And where, one asks, was public monitoring? And the international observers? And simply eyewitnesses without inverted commas?

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] Why is the GAS "Vybory" electronic vote counting system recently demonstrated to journalists receiving such diverse assessments? Some people claim that with its aid it is possible to distort all the figures, others say the opposite....

[Ryabov] You should carry out a small analysis: Did any of those who are writing bad things about the system attend the demonstration at the Central Electoral Commission? I am sure you will receive the same answer: They were not there, they did not see it, they do not know. But to splash across the press what you yourself have only heard out of the corner of your ear — please! The trouble is that the grains of these stories fall on fertile ground: Our people do not trust sophisticated foreign technology and for some reason believe it has been made solely to mislead our brother.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] The well known MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS observer A. Minkin suggests using the old, tested method (counting on fingers, on paper, on abacuses, or on calculators) alongside the electronic counting system and then comparing the results. We will learn, albeit belatedly, whether the machine is lying....

[Ryabov] One more very convincing piece of evidence that a man is writing about something about which he has no concept, that he has not looked at the law and has not set eyes on the GAS "Vybory" system.

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He was not the one to invent this method of comparing one set of results with another. The first and unconditional requirement of the law is that all documents should be processed manually. The machine will for the time being operate only for tuning purposes. When we have been convinced that it operates effectively then we shall think about how and when to launch it as the main instrument. It looks as though it is to some people's advantage for Russia always to be at an old-fashioned level so even the first attempt to reach a higher technological standard is being questioned.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA has already described the thrust and point of the "Vybory" system and has proven most convincingly that this mechanism is aimed not at distorting the truth but at revealing it precisely and rapidly and preventing all kinds of errors. I see no point in repeating myself.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] What do you have to say about the extensive statements on television by undoubtedly authoritative figures like Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyin, for instance, unequivocally criticizing the electoral system which is emerging in our country?

[Ryabov] I can only sincerely regret it. I cannot see any malicious intent here but in my opinion there is ignorance of the true state of affairs and reluctance to look into it. After one of his speeches I tried to argue with them. No, he would not listen to argument. In particular I spoke with him about the percentage of those taking part in the elections. In the United States he tried to persuade me that 60-70 percent of the population goes to vote. And although he has spent half his life there he does not know that far from every American is a voter. To become a voter he must express the desire to become one and must register. We do not have registration but a record, although we call it registration. We put everyone on the list but in the United States it is half at most. In percentage terms approximately the same proportion of the population votes in the United States as it does in our country and sometimes the percentage is smaller. I say this not from hearsay, I myself have traveled to make a special study of the way the matter is organized.

In France the question is put even more drastically. There, unless you have taken part in the elections you cannot venture to criticize the government or its policy. By refusing to take part in the elections you have already proven that you are indifferent to the matter. In our country it still happens that people have not been and will not go to any elections but still say: Down with them all!

We are by no means avoiding positive foreign experience and we are pleased for all those who are sincerely interested in it to take part in the establishment of the Russian electoral system.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] It is now being said increasingly frequently that at the forthcoming elections victory will be ensured solely for the "money-bags."

[Ryabov] The laws we expect clearly stipulate equality of financial opportunities for those seeking to be the people's elected representatives. Previously this was merely stated.

At the forthcoming elections a mechanism for monitoring funds will be put into operation. Candidate deputies will be banned from using any money apart from those entering the election fund.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] Given the Russian inventiveness surely it will be possible to "circumvent" these restrictions?

[Ryabov] We shall remove those who have been fined from the race. Forms of sanctions have been defined. Banking control will be set up. We will know exactly how much has entered the account of a particular electoral fund and where the money comes from and how it is spent. If a candidate or electoral association uses money in excess of what has entered their fund the commission has the right to ask the court to repeal the decision to register them within five days and, on election day, immediately.

Of course we realize that we will not manage to resolve all problems immediately but we shall be constantly developing the technology for granting various financial opportunities for candidates.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] Many people are worried by the inequality of the campaigning potential of the future deputies. Some people's elected representatives are already trying to get coverage as frequently as possible in the press with their election programs, not hesitating to use their present status as deputies....

[Ryabov] That is intolerable. The law makes an exception only for one person in the state — the country's president or in extreme cases for the chairman of the government if he is acting as president. For all the rest the terms are the same: If you want to take part in the election struggle, you must go on leave and decide these problems. You have no right to use your official or deputy's status. If any of the present deputies declares he is a candidate deputy for the future convocation and goes on an election tour on deputy's expenses then he will be violating the law he himself has adopted, which bans the use of any funds except those from the electoral fund he has created.

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But it should be noted that this question has not yet been finally thought through in our country. Under the law all the present deputies who are thinking of seeking a new term must goon leave as of 17 August, which is not very likely. But on the other hand no one is pushing them to the struggle for the new seats.

[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA] But at the end of the summer are we not running the risk of finding ourselves with many "denuded" departments and state structures and with a half-empty parliament as the race for the deputies' seats begins. Conscientious parliamentarians who have proved their suitability in the Federal Assembly will lose out at the start of this competition.

[Ryabov] If some chiefs go on leave for a little longer, that will not necessarily be a bad thing for the country. With regard to the deputies there is of course a problem. But let it be resolved in the time remaining.

The election racer has not yet begun but as we can see plenty of questions have already piled up. I hope that meetings between us of this kind will become regular and I promise to answer all the most urgent question honestly.

Military Issues

Prosecutors Fear Rosvooruzheniye Probe Could Go Deeper

MK1805093095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 2

[Report by Pavel Fomin in the "Investigation" column: "The General Prosecutor's Office Has Stood Up for Rosvooruzheniye. Army Officers Working in the Company Have Been Recalled to Their Units"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As our paper reported earlier, the day before yesterday the Russian Federation General Prosecutor's Office issued an official statement expressing concern over the "appearance in some domestic and foreign mass media outlets of reports and commentaries about abuses and violations by Russian Federation organizations promoting military-technical cooperation with foreign countries, which gives rise to various rumors and speculation."

Observers close to Rosvooruzheniye note that the General Prosecutor's Office very rarely comes out with such statements against the media. Apparently when the Rosvooruzheniye case was still in embryonic shape, nobody expected it to produce such a broad response in the end. First of all, law enforcement bodies did not realize that virtually all major central newspapers had already accumulated solid background material on Rosvooruzheniye. As a result, a local operation initiated at the top to eliminate a number of unamenable personalities from the arms market, under a squall of investigative publications in the press, grew into something bigger, which threatens to shake the company's entire structure and Russia's positions on foreign arms markets. This fact is indirectly confirmed by the General Prosecutor's Office's statement, which says that "the company maintains normal working conditions, ensuring the fulfillment of its obligations before domestic and foreign partners." The situation must be so bad that the General Prosecutor's Office itself (which it may but must not do) has partly to restore the company's business reputation in the eyes of its clients. Thus, it is stressed that the Rosvooruzheniye leadership is rendering "the necessary assistance to the investigation, and is taking measures to rectify the omissions established by the inspection."

Legal experts believe that now the General Prosecutor's Office is afraid to dig a little deeper so as not to step on the toes of those structures which were in confrontation with the company leadership, fighting for their positions in Rosvooruzheniye. And because the flow of information and leaks via the mass media is not subject to control, it is not ruled out that some facts could filter through in the press which are "embarrassing" to the investigation, and which the General Prosecutor's Office or its subdivisions will have to probe. Therefore it is not excluded that Ilyushenko is simply coming under pressure from the top so that he "does not go too far."

Meanwhile, according to reports from the company itself, it is being swayed by a rather panicky mood. Thus, for instance, on directive by the Russian Federation Defense Ministry Main Cadre Directorate, all army officers assigned to Rosvooruzheniye as experts and advisers have been recalled to their units. According to informal reports, this follows an unofficial directive from Pavel Grachev, who wanted to distance himself from "such an odious structure." Rumor has it that several more organizations that have done business with the company are going to do the same.

Marines' Record in Chechnya Defended

MM1705135595 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Interview with Colonel General Ivan Skuratov, commander of Russian Navy Coastal Troops (Beregovyye Voyska), by Andrey Gavrilenko; place and date not given: "Marines (Morskaya Pekhota) in the Chechnya Conflict. Commander of Russian Navy Coastal Troops Colonel General Ivan Skuratov Talks About Lessons

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Learned From the Fighting" — first paragraph is introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text]

From KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's File

Ivan Sidorovich Skuratov was born in 1940. He graduated from the P.S. Nakhimov Black Sea Higher Naval School, the N.G. Kuznetsov Naval Academy, and the Academy of the General Staff. He has served in the Black Sea, Pacific, and Baltic Fleets. He has commanded the Baltic Fleet coastal troops. He is a doctor of military sciences and a full member of the International Academy of Information Technology and the Russian Academy of Military Sciences.

[Gavrilenko] Ivan Sidorovich, there has been plenty written and said about the seamen and marines who had to restore constitutional order in Chechnya. We know that many of them have been recommended for awards. Many have already received their decorations. In particular nine marines — Colonel Aleksandr Darkovich, Majors Andrey Gushin and Yevgeniy Kolesnikov (posthumously), Captains Viktor Shulyak and Dmitriy Polkovnikov, Senior Warrant Officer Grigoriy Zamyshlyak, Senior Lieutenants Viktor Vdovkin and Sergey Firsov (posthumously), and Lieutenant Vladimir Borovikov (posthumously) — have been awarded the lofty title of Hero of the Russian Federation. But no honors lists or tersely-worded orders will tell the reader what you know about them, as someone who was directly involved in these events and who was, incidentally, also recently awarded a presentation weapon. So, would you first like to talk about the marines, Col. Gen. Ivan Skuratov?

[Skuratov] First of all I flatly reject the claims that boys were sent to Chechnya as "cannon fodder." And I believe that the overwhelming majority of marine officers who took part in the combat operations will support me in this. In the very heat of the fighting the marines never retreated, never abandoned a single line, home, approach, or height.

Despite the fact that we encountered many problems when marine subunits were being trained before being sent to Chechnya. Thus, for instance, when manning the Northern and Baltic Fleet battalions personnel were mustered from over 50 troops units and the Pacific Fleet's 165th Marine Regiment was brought up to strength over a short period with servicemen from over 100 coastal units and ships. We spent too little time on their training....

[Gavrilenko] Is that not why the marines suffered considerable losses during the fighting?

[Skuratov] In four months of fighting 110 marines have died. It is hard, although people do say: War is hell. It is after all also important to ensure that there are no absurd losses. I think that we avoided that with the marines.

However, we had to operate in the main sectors so to speak: We fought on the approaches to the presidential palace, the Council of Ministers building, the "Kavkaz" Hotel, the telegraph office.... And marines were universally notable for their bravery and heroism. Regardless of rank and position, moreover. To be frank I am enraged by certain mass media articles about alleged drunkenness among marine officers. It is said that the officers were drinking while the seamen did the fighting for them. All that does not accord with the reality. Here are just a few words about Captain Viktor Shulyak, a young officer who commanded a Northern Fleet marine autonomous marine assault company and who was awarded the Hero of Russia title by Russian Federation presidential edict 17 April. Capt. Shulyak's company joined the fighting right off on the approaches to the Council of Ministers building, encountering fierce resistance from superior enemy forces. Nevertheless the marines penetrated the building, where they also had to fight for every room. Throughout this the company commander set his subordinates an example — in the hand-to- hand combat by personally killing several guerrillas and during the shooting by overwhelming three machine-gun crews. Despite sustaining two wounds and losing blood, he continued to direct the fighting. In your opinion how can drunks — which is what people sometimes try to make us out to be — be capable of this?

I am not saying this in order to boost servicemen's reputation, although I do of course value it. I am sorry for the people who are undeservedly insulted by some zealous war "correspondents." Officers greatly value the concept of marine honor. And they would not want their mass media to cast a slur on any of those who uphold that honor.

Three Pacific Fleet marines learned what jail is like. One of them, an ensign, died. Another servicemen, a seaman, was handed over to us after two months by local Chechen villagers. And another, an officer, is still in jail. We have made repeated attempts to exchange him for Dudayev men, but so far without success. According to our information he is alive, and we will do everything in our power to secure his release.

[Gavrilenko] The press has said plenty of unflattering things not only about Russian servicemen but also about our weapons....

[Skuratov] One cannot be categorical on this point either. The war has shown that we do indeed need to abandon some kinds of arms. Thus, the battalion

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commander's command fighting vehicle was developed from a BTR-60 and is outdated, runs on gasoline, and has twin motors. This vehicle is not capable of keeping up with our BTR-80's, it lags behind on the march, and holds up the convoy. Marines and, moreover, Ground Forces representatives have many complaints regarding communications systems. Small, light, convenient, closed systems are needed so that the enemy cannot infiltrate our networks and systems. And servicemen right down to a squad commander need to be supplied with them.

In my view, marines' gear and equipment is not entirely well- conceived. A bulletproof vest alone, for instance, weighs around 13 kg. Yet in addition to that every servicemen carries ammunition, food, and weapons. The people who develop it should take that kind of "baggage" on a forced march.... The helmet is the forties model.... Thus the specialists have food for thought.

But by and large our military equipment has shown itself at its best.

[Gavrilenko] Various "rights campaigners" are literally reveling today in the "facts" pertaining to the troops' punitive actions in Chechnya and pillage by servicemen. Your subordinates were quite frequently the first to enter population centers. How have they actually behaved as occupiers?

[Skuratov] I have no information regarding any local complaints about the marines. I have had several meetings with Chechnya's civilian inhabitants and spoken to them, and have always heard only warm, kind words about our servicemen. The Chechens described their by no means pleasant life under Dudayev and thanked us for our aid — the marines shared food and medicine with them and distributed warm clothing. I have no information regarding any pillaging by marines.

[Gavrilenko] During the battle for Groznyy and other operations the marines had to perform tasks that were somewhat alien to them....

[Skuratov] But was it natural for any servicemen, whose task is to defend the Fatherland from an external enemy, to be taking part in this war? We were all operating in conditions where the Army is performing new functions dictated by the current realities, the threat to the state's integrity. The marines' main function is indeed amphibious landing. At the same time it is the marines that defend our own naval bases on dry land. So, from the viewpoint of combat training, participation in resolving the Chechnya conflict carried no particular surprises for us. After all, organizing defense against an amphibious assault requires the ability to fight in cities and near docks, piers, and port installations....

Furthermore, in Groznyy the marines operated in assault groups and detachments which consistently captured buildings and blocks, sometimes without having neighbors to their right or left and sometimes even in total isolation. These actions are in some respects identical to the assault operations carried out by a landing force to gain control of a coastline and a port — without flanking forces and sometimes without support from standard-issue combat equipment and artillery, which cannot be landed for various reasons.

That is, I would like to say that in principle, militarily speaking, the marines are ready to perform the kind of tasks that they had to perform in Chechnya and wage hostilities in a city. The fact that we had certain problems with combat teamwork training and command of the combined formations owing to the units' undermanning, as I said earlier, is another matter.

[Gavrilenko] How did marines adapt mentally to combat conditions? They came into the war as boys and they leave....

[Skuratov] One's mentality changes completely during a war. Everyone who went there — please forgive me for the high-flown language — starts to value his life. I asked seamen and NCO's what they would advise their replacements. I got the following reply: "Excellent physical training and ability to fire fast and accurately are what are needed in this war." Needless to say, the list of qualities that a serviceman needs in a combat situation, particularly one as contradictory as Chechnya, should be more extensive. Incidentally, many of these qualities — courage, nobility, mutual assistance, etc. — are clearly manifest in the actions taken by enlisted men and officers. Nonetheless I think that they grasped the correct essence of the matter. It may only be in wartime that you understand the full relevance of the trite idea that you have to learn the art of war for real.

[Gavrilenko] Comrade Colonel General, some marine units are still in Chechnya. Are there plans to send more subunits there?

[Skuratov] The Northern and Baltic Fleet assault battalions were withdrawn from Chechnya at the end of March. The Pacific Fleet marine regiment is currently still there. Incidentally, during the first phase of the combat operations this was the regiment that successfully held two bridgeheads on the left bank of the Sunzha River, preventing guerrillas from breaking through from the right- bank section of Groznyy. The regiment recently received reinforcements.

As for sending more subunits there.... I hope that this is not necessary; God forbid that this should happen.

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[Gavrilenko] Ivan Sidorovich, you are not only a military commander but also a military academic. My next question may not sound entirely tactful to John Doe, but nevertheless: How has this war enriched your knowledge?

[Skuratov] Life has once again confirmed that the marines are a special, unified branch of not only the Navy but also of the Russian Armed Forces. And all the relevant structures should take care of them. Marine units and large formations should be deployed at full strength and be fully combat-capable even in peacetime. Then it would not be necessary to man marine units urgently, in a rush, with untrained servicemen, taking them off ships and auxiliary coastal units as happened at the start of the events in Chechnya.

Regrettably, this experience is nothing new, but it has been almost forgotten since the Great Patriotic War. I hope that at the end of the Chechnya operation these conclusions will be put into practice with regard to the marines.

[Gavrilenko] Since you have broached what I can see is a painful issue, let us be frank and describe the nature of this — to use your expression — special unified branch of the troops today.

[Skuratov] As a branch of the troops the marines are a component of each of our four fleets. The Pacific Fleet has a marine division while the Northern, Baltic, and Black Sea Fleets have a brigade each. Given their current numbers, marine combined formations mainly look after themselves. And those who are in the marines are by no means always of stunning intellect or in excellent health. Combat training has been cut to a minimum. Catastrophic underfunding is causing delays with the repair and construction of landing craft.

Given this situation it is needless to say very hard to serve. Officers bear the brunt of this, primarily company and platoon commanders. They have to work 14 hours a day, and all marine combat training hinges on them.

In general, the marines do have plenty of problems, and they must be resolved as soon as possible.

Federal Assembly

Duma Statement Condemns Croatia's Offensive

LD1705162495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1231 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — The Russian State Duma (lower house) Wednesday issued a statement condemning Croatia's offensive on western Slavonija earlier this month.

The statement, drawn up by the Duma international affairs committee and overwhelmingly supported by deputies, describes as totally unacceptable attempts to try to bring a military solution to the existing problems in the region.

Russian deputies showed serious concern at the gross violation of the human rights of Slavonija's Serb population calling on Croatia to observe them unconditionally.

The statement says any provocation against the UN peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslavia must be checked, while Russia must be prepared to carry out an operation to pull out its peacekeepers if the lives of Russian servicemen come under threat.

The Duma also demanded an immediate retreat of Croatian troops to their positions assigned under the agreement of March 29, 1994.

Duma Votes To Send Observers for Crimean Referendum

LD1705162895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1324 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — The Russian State Duma Wednesday passed a resolution to send a team of observers to Crimea to monitor a regional referendum due on May 25.

This comes in response to a plea from the Crimean parliament to Russian deputies to act as guarantors of the territorial poll. Among other things, Crimeans are asked whether they agree to endorse the regional constitution which was unilaterally abolished by Kiev on March 17, 1995.

The resolution offers Ukraine to allow Crimeans to vote on their own constitution, to give up any pressure on the local population and government and start negotiations on contentious issues in line with the electorate's wishes.

The Russian Government is offered to speed up the negotiating process with Kiev, with the view of the local population and that of the democratically-elected regional bodies being taken into account.

Nuclear Energy Bills Fail To Pass Third Reading

MK1805103095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 2

[Report by Veronica Romanenkova under the "Atom" rubric: "'Nuclear' Legislation Does Not Pan Out in Russia on Third Attempt as Well"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Three "nuclear" laws — "On the Use of Nuclear Energy," "On State Policy in the Field

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of Handling Nuclear Waste," and "On Radiation Safety of the Population" — failed to pass third reading as one package. The snag was the first of the mentioned draft laws, or rather its fifth article, "Ownership of Nuclear Plants, Radiation Sources, Storage Centers, Nuclear Materials, and Radioactive Substances." In advance of the third reading, some "fundamental amendments" were made to its text which the deputies could not accept.

The two other draft laws satisfied the deputies. Which cannot be said about nuclear industry people. On the insistence of ecologists, the law "On State Policy in the Field of Handling Nuclear Waste" was amended while passing second reading; it now consider as radioactive waste the expended fuel of atomic electric power stations, hence its import to Russia is banned. Russia already has several agreements with other countries where Soviet-built nuclear stations operate (Finland, Hungary, and so on) entitling these countries to ship to Russia expended nuclear fuel for recycling. The Russian Federation is netting millions of dollars every year for such "shipments." Similar relations are also provided for in the notorious "Iranian contract." True, the law also contains an article enabling one to get around the ban on importing expended fuel. But in order to invoke it, Rosenergoatom will have to clear a series of hurdles, first and foremost of which will be to obtain clearance from the state ecological experts committee.

State Duma Passes Radioactive Waste Law

LD1705223695 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma today passed laws on the federal policy regarding the treatment of radioactive waste and the radiation safety of the population. Among other things, the documents enshrine the right of the citizens and public organizations to receive information promptly on the burial sites of toxic waste and on the radiation situation in any region.

Nuclear Privatization Legislation Disputed

MM1805082895 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Article by Sergey Leskov: "Nuclear Power Stations Could Go Private"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Recent events attest very clearly that the nuclear department has turned out far more stable than supposed by "green" movement activists, who with their discordant noise managed to slow down only for a short while the triumphant march of the tamers of the "peaceful" atom.

The Law on the Utilization of Atomic Energy, the need for which has long been spoken of by all specialists, is to be examined on its third and final reading in the State Duma Wednesday 17 May. Sensational innovations come to light on a careful reading of the draft law. In particular, the draft law makes it possible to transfer from federal to private ownership nuclear stations, ships, submarines, spacecraft, aircraft, and ranges without defense significance, as well as radioactive substances. In the opinion of Tamara Zlotnikova, deputy chairman of the State Duma Ecology Committee, this proposal runs counter to several articles of the Constitution and the Civil Code.

Let us add: It also runs counter to common sense. References to the fact that private ownership of nuclear installations is permitted in some developed countries are quite out of place if you recall the realities of the country in which we have the good fortune to live. We seem to have started to forget the dangers inherent in AES's [nuclear electric power stations], although less than 10 years have elapsed since Chernobyl.

The purpose of the reform is obvious even to newborn babies. We know how well a multitude of tricksters have succeeded in warming their hands on the privatization of major industrial projects, including in the energy sector. How their palms itch at the sight of AES's which have not yet been turned to their advantage! To paraphrase one cynical leader, it is possible to say: Money does not radiate.

The State Duma Legal Administration drew an extremely negative conclusion on this draft law, making 38 important observations. No lesser upheavals are threatened by those provisions which make the following questions exclusively the responsibility of federal organs of power: the adoption of decisions on carrying out underground nuclear explosions and on designing and operating installations that pose a radiation danger, and ensuring the security of nuclear plants. And yet the constitution unequivocally states that these questions are the joint responsibility of the Russian Federation and its components.

It is no wonder that the State Duma has received over 20 protests from administration heads and leaders of representative organs of various components of the Federation from Moscow to Chukotka. The Greenpeace international organization has sent the government a petition signed by 150,000 German citizens, which speaks of "incredibly lax handling of radioactive substances" in Russia. But the distribution of forces in parliament, which took shape under the influence of massive lobbying by the nuclear department, makes it possible to assume that AES's could soon really be transferred to

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private hands, while nuclear tests will be conducted even without notifying the local authorities.

Another "nuclear" scandal is near at hand. The State Duma has, for the first time, put a question to the Constitutional Court concerning the constitutionality of the Russian Federation president's edict on the construction near Krasnoyarsk, with its population of 1 million, of a plant where foreign radioactive waste will be processed. This is not the fuel that Russia supplies to AES's built to its plans. It is garbage that is absolutely foreign to us, about which negotiations had already been conducted with Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, South Korea....

Even specialists dispute the project's technical validity. But everyone agrees that a vast quantity of low-level (i.e. with a long half-life) [note as published] radioactive waste which cannot be returned to the Western client will have to be buried on the territory of Krasnoyarsk Kray, where 4 million cubic meters of similar garbage has already been buried. In 30 years' time (the plant's period of operation) it is proposed to close it down and completely bury it — something that no one in the world knows how to do at present.

In the opinion of experts, the president's edict is at variance with the Law on Protecting the Natural Environment, which prohibits not just the burying but even the importation onto Russian territory of foreign radioactive waste. In addition, the construction of installations which pose increased radiation danger must without fail be preceded by a state expert ecological appraisal — something which, once again, was not done in this case.

The examination of the State Duma's complaints to the president is scheduled for 30 May in the Constitutional Court. Whatever the outcome of this case, it is already clear that the nuclear department has successfully come through the winter and is once again radiating optimism. But ecologists are obviously distinguished by an inability to adapt to the parliamentary milieu, where they have failed to organize a lobby that is in any way authoritative.

Duma Approves Bill To Protect Families, Minors

LD1705202995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1253 GMT 17 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 May — At its plenary sitting the State Duma today approved the draft family code at a first reading.

During this document's presentation and discussion the deputies noted that it was being drawn up because of radical changes in the country's economic and political life immediately affecting such major social institutions as marriage and the family. During the discussion of the bill it was stressed that it is necessary to bring the family legislation of the Russian Federation in line with the new constitution, the civil code and also with acts of international law ratified by Russia, including the UN convention on the rights of the child.

The draft law is aimed at improving the legal foundations for strengthening the family, the provision of an effective legal defense for its members in the new socio-economic conditions, and also at guarding the interests of family members who are minors and disabled. The code contains a considerable number of innovations: for instance, norms for a higher responsibility of the parents for the upbringing and development of children have been introduced and the child has been recognized as an equal participant in family relations. The document envisages that husband and wife should be given the right through the marriage contract to establish a system of ownership of common property and the adoptive family is consolidated at a legislative level.

The first stage of a huge amount of work has been completed — it will be continued in parliamentary committees. It will suffice to say that deputies have examined more than 120 expert opinions on the draft family code originating from the legislative and executive bodies of the authorities of the components of the Federation were examined by the deputies and that its draft was discussed at three all-Russian conferences of legislators.

Law Passed on Services for Elderly, Disabled

LD1705185395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1508 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — The State Duma today adopted a law on social services for elderly and disabled persons in the third reading. Social services will include care, organization of feeding, assistance in receiving medical care, legal, social-psychological and other help.

Social services will be available for elderly people (women older than 55 years and men older than 60 years) and disabled persons who need permanent or temporary assistance because of partial or complete loss of the capacity to satisfy vital needs independently due to limited mobility.

The law stipulates that social services included in the federal list of social services guaranteed by the state will be provided for free or for partial or full payment.

Social services will be free for single elderly persons and disabled persons whose pension is below the

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minimum for subsistence, set for the region where they live, and elderly and disabled persons living in families whose average income per person is below the minimum for subsistence set for the region where they live.

Duma Postpones Decision on Federation Council

LD1705190695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1224 GMT 17 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 May—Today's decision by the State Duma to postpone considering the draft law on forming the Federation Council until Boris Yeltsin defines his position on the law on the election of deputies of the lower chamber is regarded in parliamentary corridors as putting pressure on the president. As is known, the law on the election of Duma deputies is awaiting the signature of the head of state.

The draft law on forming the Federation Council was passed in its first reading and included on the preliminary agenda of today's plenary session. However, at the suggestion of Deputy Sergey Baburin (of the Russian Way group), the decision was made to postpone the second reading until the position over the law on the elections of deputies of the State Duma becomes totally clear.

Regional Affairs

Group Heads to Chechen Village To Identify Body

LD1805114095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1024 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nazran, May 18 (Interfax) — On Thursday morning a special commission made up of representatives of Ingushetia's Emergency Situations Ministry, OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] representatives in Chechnya, and physicians from the International Committee of the Red Cross went to the mountain village of Shatoy in Chechnya's south to identify the body of a man said to be employee of the Soros Fund, American citizen Fred Cuny. The latter disappeared in Chechnya more than a month ago. The body was recently found near the Chechen village of Geldugin.

Cuny's relatives have also departed for Shatoy.

Previous attempts to reach the village were fruitless mostly due to combat operations in this region.

Ingushetia's Emergency Situations Minister Khamzat Bekov reported to Interfax that a task force made up of Ingushetia's Interior Ministry and armored vehicles accompany the column. He expressed the hope that there would be no accidents on the way to the village because Ingushetia's President Ruslan Aushev, Bekov said, "has had several telephone talks with the command of the federal forces in Chechnya and asked to ensure safe transit through the zone of hostilities."

Meanwhile, an informed source in Nazran reported to Interfax that on Thursday night the federal forces continued shelling positions of the Chechen home guards near the village of Bamut in Chechnya's southwest. In the morning of May 18, the source said, several rocket strikes from helicopters were inflicted against regions nearby Bamut.

The Russian forces refrain from carrying out any offensive operations. The Chechen party asserts that they are regrouping.

Political Leaders Assert Willingness To Negotiate on Chechnya

Chernomyrdin: Talks 'Unilateral Wish'

LD1705194495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1924 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on Wednesday reiterated that the government is ready to settle the Chechen crisis at the negotiation table.

Speaking to reporters, Chernomyrdin said that the federal government is ready to start negotiations with separatist field commanders, but complained that the latter fail to express their readiness for talks.

"We come out in favour of negotiations and are ready to halt hostilities and bloodshed in Chechnya, but so far it has been an unilateral wish", Chernomyrdin said.

Sees 'New Basis' for Negotiations

LD1705214495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2127 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) - Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin believes, as before, that the search for a peaceful solution to the Chechen crisis should be continued.

"What is important is that the Chechen people cannot be held responsible for the extremist activities of a bunch of political adventurers," he said Wednesday in response to an Interfax question.

Chernomyrdin is prepared to continue talks on resolving the Chechen conflict at any level. He believes it would be logical for the provisional representative body of the Chechen Republic, the National Accord Committee

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under Umar Avturkhanov, whose overriding priority is to seek reconciliation, to take part in the talks.

According to Chernomyrdin, certain conditions in Chechnya are favorable for the resumption of the negotiating process on a new basis, in particular as a kind of a round table attended by officials of the Territorial Board of Federal Authorities in the Chechen Republic, the OSCE mission, the National Accord Committee and Dudayev's entourage who control field commanders.

He believes that the process can start with working meetings of lower level delegations.

"We will see what happens next. The chief criterion in this case is cessation of hostilities," Chernomyrdin emphasized.

Abdulatipov Blames Politicians for Impasse

LD1705163895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1611 GMT 17 May 95

[By Igor Serebryakov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Deputy Federation Council Chairman Ramazan Abdulatipov called for an immediate cessation of war in Chechnya and declared that responsibility for the disruption of peace talks lies on the politicians of both sides.

"The people who prevented (us) from launching negotiations in Chechnya and reducing the level of military confrontation, and, therefore, the number of casualties in this tragedy, should be called to account," Abdulatipov said in a statement transmitted to Itar-Tass on Wednesday by his adviser Ruslan Valiyev.

"The continuation of the war plays into (Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar) Dudayev's hands," while a "political settlement would have reduced support for Dudayev's belligerent policy long ago," he said.

Abdulatipov suggested establishing the institute of representatives of the Federation Council in Chechnya to provide practical assistance in the political settlement of the situation and preparation and conduct of parliamentary elections there.

In his view, elections to the State Duma could be held in Chechnya "already today."

Chechnya's Maskhadov Calls For Halt in Fighting

LD1705134395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1231 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ARSHTY, CHECHNYA, May 17 (Interfax) — Head of the Chechen armed units' headquarters Aslan Maskhadov has called on federal troops to stop combat operations in Chechnya. An appeal of Maskhadov circulated Wednesday says that the war in Chechnya is "senseless manslaughter."

"Since the very first days of this war, I assured you that a crime of unprecedented cruelty and scale is being committed by your hands," says the appeal circulated by the headquarters.

Politicians cannot stop the war "because they are well aware they cannot be pardoned for the victims of the Chechen conflict," noted Maskhadov.

"I am well aware that we are living in a single geopolitical space (with Russia — IF), and that we will not escape from each other. We can live in peace and accord only with the help of an equal dialog," said Maskhadov.

He said he appeals to Russian officers "as a former colonel of the Soviet and Russian armies and a colleague, not as an enemy."

Commenting on the appeal, a high-ranking Russian military said in Mozdok that "nobody prevented the Dudayev supporters from stopping combat operations during the moratorium introduced by the Russian President from April 28 through May 12. As is known, Chechen militants violated the moratorium dozens of times during that period, and the federal troops fired only in response."

The military told Interfax that the dialog proposal of Maskhadov "may prove a split in the Dudayev circle," bearing in mind Dzhokhar Dudayev had repeatedly stressed any negotiations can be held only by him. "It (the possibility — IF) is not excluded that Dudayev has lost the confidence of his associates, and they are trying to push him aside and stake on Maskhadov," said the military.

General Reacts to Maskhadov's Appeal for Peace

LD1705183795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1810 GMT 17 May 95

[By Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — An appeal to the Russian military commanders to immediately stop hostilities in Chechnya issued by Aslan Maskhadov, who calls himself the chief of staff of the Chechen armed forces, was designed to make a political effect, a Russian top general said.

In an exclusive interview with Itar-Tass on Wednesday, Colonel- General Leonty Shevtsov, acting head of the Main Department of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, said the federal troops stopped combat

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activities in Chechnya after the moratorium on fighting had been declared, but illegal armed groups attacked Russian troops more than 150 times over the two weeks of the moratorium.

Over that period up to a platoon of Russian troops were killed and up to a company wounded, Shevtsov said. He pointed out that the moratorium gave Maskhadov an opportunity to assess the situation and adopt the only correct decision — to lay down arms and stop senseless resistance.

The moratorium also allowed Chechen militants to return to peaceful life without fear of any prosecution in the future. The humane act of amnesty for those who did not smear themselves with blood was strong evidence of the Russian leadership's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. This is what the Chechen people sick and tired of the hardships of life in the "republic of Ichkeriya" waited for. However, Maskhadov and his associates deceived the people and torpedoed the moratorium which would have been extended had Maskhadov's subordinates behaved respectively. But they responded to the call for peace with fire, they regrouped their forces, they brought in more weapons and ammunition and terrorised the local population, Shevtsov said.

Military confrontation in Chechnya is reaching its logical finale and Maskhadov has to make numerous statements and claim that he is ready for talks on various levels, including with Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev. However, there are no guarantees that new talks will not be used as a front for further concentration of forces and weapons. All this makes it all the more harder to believe that his appeal is sincere and honest, the general said.

"It would be good for the Chechen leaders to remember the history of the last century and do what Imam Shamil did — he laid down his sword to the feet of a Russian soldier and stopped resistance for the sake of his own people. He is still remembered by the Chechen and Russian people as a courageous warrior and a wise politician who put the interests of his ancient people beyond his own ambitions," Shevtsov said.

Update on Chechnya Battlefield Situation

'Disunited' Chechen Groups Continue Attacks

LD1705154595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1452 GMT 17 May 95

[By Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Illegal armed groups in Chechnya have become ungovernable and continue to fight in small disunited groups.

Chechen militants continue to fire at the Russian troops and attacked a unit of marines over the past 24 hours, the Department of Information and the Press of the Russian Defence Ministry and the Federal Border Guards Service told Itar-Tass on Wednesday.

Late on Tuesday, Russian border guards were attacked on the outskirts of the village of Assinovskaya. The soldiers rebuffed the attack. No casualties among the border guards were reported. However, a driver, private Nikolay Monshakov, was wounded by sniper fire.

Russian troops use artillery and combat helicopters to repel attacks. Over the past 24 hours, they destroyed 26 vehicles, one strong point, an arms cache and an aerial field.

The remains of illegal armed groups forced into the mountainous districts of Chechnya are experiencing a shortage of arms, ammunition, food and medicines, sources in the Defence Ministry said.

Intelligence reports indicate that there is less and less agreement among the so-called field commanders about the expediency of continuing their resistance. Some of them regret that they did not use the opportunity provided by the moratorium on fighting to start a constructive dialogue with the Russian authorities.

Meanwhile, more border guards continue to arrive in Groznyy.

'Relative Calm' Around Bamut

LD1705215795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2128 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NAZRAN (Ingushetia), May 17 (Interfax) — Relative calm has held in the area of the Bamut community in the Southwest of Chechnya on Wednesday, Interfax's corespondent reports. There have been sporadic fire exchanges between federal troops and Chechen militants. The positions of Dudayev's supporters were shelled with heavy artillery several times during the day.

Meanwhile, according to reliable sources in Nazran an Ingush police post will be placed in Arshty, the village closest to Bamut, to prevent any attempts by Chechen militants to cross into Ingushetia. That measure was agreed with the Russian federal troops command.

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Preparations 'Completed' for New Offensive

LD1805061295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0556 GMT 18 May 95

[By Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy May 18 (Itar-Tass) — Russian troops have, evidently, completed the preparations for a new offensive on rebel strongholds in the south-eastern foothills of Chechnya and it was relatively quiet in Groznyy and along the frontline overnight.

No major shootings were reported at the foothills in the south- east of the republic, as well as in Groznyy. Intense movements of troops to the foothills have also ceased.

Russian combat helicopters and planes flew over Groznyy in the southern and south-eastern direction Thursday, however, no bomb explosions were heard from Groznyy.

Most evidently, preparations for a new offensive of Russian troops have been completed and the command is waiting how the situation would develop.

On Wednesday, the military commander of Chechen rebels, Aslan Maskhadov, proposed new talks with the Russian forces. Russian Prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin also called for talks with Chechen rebels to end the five-month conflict.

Conflicting Stories About Oil Depot Fire

MM1705191995 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Report by Nikoilay Kozhanov: "Chechnya: Oil Depots on Fire"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amid the confused mosaic of reports from Chechnya even apparently obvious facts often assume a further dimension. It is claimed, for example, that all is more or less calm in Groznyy, (not counting the nighttime shoot-outs), but then you get thick plumes of burning oil billowing up from the northern and southern outskirts of the capital. What is going on? The military at their posts, ITAR-TASS reports, talk of audacious sabotage by the Dudayevites, who have set fire to a fuel oil depot at a cement plant and oil tanks in the Sunzhenskiy Mountains. Then you get locals insisting that random firing by federal forces was to blame. Whatever way you look at it, the ecological damage is enormous, not to mention the economic losses.

It is hard to say at the moment which of the foregoing versions is correct. But it is not inconceivable that the Dudayev leadership was very unhappy about the recent deal struck by the Salambek Khadzhiyev government, earning $2.6 million from the sale of 30,000 tonnes of Chechen oil, which it intends to use to pay oil workers and restore the republic's fuel and power complex.

Ever increasing efforts are being made to block the republic's administrative borders. A special detachment from the Caucasus Special Border District has just been given the Russian-Georgian sector of the border on the territory of Chechnya to guard. According to the border forces' leadership, this will enable them to prevent the remnants of the Dudayevite forces trapped in the mountains from replenishing their arsenals and enlisting new mercenaries from outside, which will hasten the end of the prolonged and grim conflict.

Chechen Offers Guarantees to Deserting Soldiers

LD1705155895 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1230 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Nazran (IPRINDA) — An agency correspondent reports that in connection with a growing number of deserters in the Russian Army and a voluntary surrender of Russian soldiers, Aslan Maskhadov, the commander of the Chechen army, has issued a decree according to which soldiers and officers of the Russian Army who surrender voluntarily will be given safety guarantees. The Chechen side will pay the Russian soldiers for their arms, supply them with civilian clothes, and help them get back to their country. Severe measures, including execution, will be exercised against those who are taken prisoner.

Displaced Persons Number 370,000

LD1705123595 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1100 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to official figures, displaced persons from Chechnya number 370,000, including some 140,000 Russians. These figures were quoted today at a conference in Kaliningrad, near Moscow, of heads of territorial migration services of Russia. According to the forecast of Tatyana Regent, head of the Federal Migration Service, even after the end of the conflict these people are not likely to return to Chechnya. They cannot, however, count on obtaining housing in their new areas because with current financing an underpriviledged migrant cannot obtain housing earlier than 30 years hence.

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Minister Gives Reassurances on Food Supplies

MM1705131995 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 17 May 95 p 3

[Report by Valentina Vedesova and Yelena Ishkova under the "Hot Spots" rubric: "Chechen Economy Reviving"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite the shooting, restoration work is in full swing in the Chechen Republic. Some 156 km of power lines and 230 km of gas pipelines have been commissioned. Fourteen hospitals and six polyclinics are working in Groznyy and adjoining settlements. Eighty-five trade outlets have opened. Fifty-two buses are operating on 22 regular routes. Rail traffic along the Groznyy-Mineralnyye Vody and Groznyy-Moscow routes has begun.

The republic's inhabitants are experiencing no problems with the bread supply, according to the assurance given by Aleksandr Nazarchuk, Russian minister of agriculture and food. Groznyy's No. 5 Bakery Combine, which was worst affected, is being restored. Other bakeries are producing 47 tonnes of bread a day, despite the fact they are operating on diesel plants and the water supply has been cut off. Some 36,000 tonnes of flour and 5,000 tonnes of groats have been sent to Chechnya — it is estimated that this should be enough until the new harvest arrives.

The new harvest is causing special concern. To enable sowing work to be carried out 150 tractors, 40 combines, and 50 trucks have been leased to the republic. The peasants have been supplied with seed. Even the rest of the population has been given help with seed potatoes. Farms are experiencing no fuel shortage. The only problem has to do with machine operator cadres. However, the sowing work, covering an area of 100,000 hectares, has been completed.

The Dudayev regime inflicted especially heavy damage on public sector stockraising. In the past three years it has switched almost entirely to personal plots. Where major livestock units have survived the feed base is poor. Two poultry farms have to be rebuilt so that the republic can supply itself with eggs. Several thousand farmstead-type homes will have to be built. Finally the Chechen Agriculture Ministry building will have to be restored to its former state and the ministry will finally have to be properly staffed. Aleksandr Nazarchuk gave an assurance that this will be one of the first state structures to be restored and begin supplying the countryside.

Justice Minister Promises 'Whole Truth' on Chechnya

MM1705141195 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 May 95 First Edition pp 1-2

[Article by Valentin Kovalev, Russian Federation minister of justice, under the "At First Hand" rubric: "The Truth and Nothing But the Truth"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The number of people wishing to study the problems of Chechnya is not diminishing. Although all of them can theoretically be divided into two categories — those who discuss the matter idly, and those who really act. Our commission acts. Let me remind you that it was formed at the end of last year in accordance with an edict of the Russian Federation president. Unlike other commissions, its work has a clear thrust — to monitor chiefly the legal component in the Chechen crisis, the human rights violations that occur there. Here we do not divide people into us and them. To us, they are all citizens of the Russian Federation. All violations are recorded, whether on the part of the Dudayev regime or on the part of servicemen of the federal troops, the local administration, or the central authorities. The commission has three subcommissions: military, legal, and socioeconomic. Once the illegal armed formations are eliminated, it is proposed to disband the military subcommission. The center of gravity of our activity is gradually shifting from the military component to the socioeconomic. And in this respect, despite the fact that the commission, in accordance with its statute, is temporary, its socioeconomic subcommission is, figuratively speaking, immortal, since the socioeconomic component will never lose its relevance.

The circumstances surrounding the liberation of the settlement of Samashki prompted a great public response. All kinds of contradictory opinions were expressed, and there was no shortage of blatant political exploitation of what happened. A lawsuit has even sprung up between State Duma deputies who hold different views of what happened.

What is our commission's stance? On my instructions, a special group made up of commission members and highly qualified experts studied the circumstances of the village's liberation most carefully. An enormous amount of work was done, making it possible to draw some conclusions.

The first of these, which I do not think anyone can refute, is this: Contrary to numerous reports in the mass media, neither airborne bomb strikes nor artillery shelling took place during the village's liberation.

Our second finding was on a different subject. During this period there were robberies, violence, and murders

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of local inhabitants. Who did this, who, in lawyers' language, were the perpetrators of the crimes? The members of our commission established that it was people in a single kind of uniform, whose membership of Dudayev's formations or of federal troops has not been established. All the facts at our disposal do not provide grounds for an unequivocal answer. Let me stress that they all wore the same uniform. Nonetheless, certain characteristics necessary for the identification of the people who committed the violence, robberies, and murders have been established. Quite a lot of material was collected in the course of the questioning of local inhabitants. Now all the Temporary Oversight Commission's documents have been handed over to the General Prosecutor's Office in order to identify these people. Criminal proceedings have been instituted on the basis of these materials and an investigation is in progress. But since there are still a great many unresolved questions, the commission is not letting the course of the investigation out of its sight.

Or take another of the most pressing problems, affecting not only Samashki, but many other places too. I am talking about looting. The commission has received complaints from local inhabitants, on the basis of which measures have been adopted and criminal proceedings instituted. A number of people have been arrested. But for the sake of objectivity I must say this. In the vast majority of cases the servicemen themselves, mainly privates, make no secret of the fact that in exceptional situations, on occupying combat positions in houses and wrecked buildings that the inhabitants have left, they consumed the food they found there.

We are investigating each specific case. Applying, as a rule, certain classifications in such cases that are stipulated in law. What am I referring to? First, persons who have committed actions deemed insignificant from the viewpoint of danger to the public are not subject to criminal liability. That is to say, it may be a question of disciplinary liability, liability under the regulations, but not criminal liability. And the second classification recognized in our law is the theory of extreme need. If a serviceman consumes food not belonging to him personally in conditions of extreme need, I personally see no grounds for criminal proceedings against him. All other cases of looting not coming into the above categories are being examined without fail.

I have already said that I regard our commission as really active. What form does this take? On the basis of the results of the activities of the special group of observers and experts, I have sent about 40 submissions to various ministries and departments (the Defense Ministry, the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Emergencies Ministry, the Health Ministry, etc.) demanding that the necessary measures be adopted within the bounds of their areas of responsibility. Here is an illustration. On arriving in Groznyy we found a considerable number of bodies on the streets. Nobody was removing them. Does the burial of corpses fall within the remit of the Commission for the Observance of Citizens' Constitutional Rights and Freedoms? Certainly not. But how could we ignore this problem that was crying out for attention?! We immediately adopted the necessary measures and sent several submissions to the relevant organizations.

Or take the restoration of vital services to the capital of Chechnya. A great many concrete questions had to be addressed. For instance, organizing the delivery of construction equipment to clear away the rubble. We believed there could still be people alive in the wreckage. We acted promptly and sent in the necessary machinery by air. A good many lives were saved.

An ultra-important problem today is, I believe, the restoration of the education system in the Chechen Republic. While I was there, I tried to talk with children in the Chechen backwoods. Many of them do not speak Russian at all. Nobody has taught them Russian. Yet the Russian language — and this is not my opinion, but that of the Chechen intelligentsia — is the umbilical cord that binds the Chechen people to world culture. Cutting it entails negative consequences for that people's intellectual future. Therefore we are now striving to revive the education system in the republic.

During Dudayev's rule the system of medical services to the population was also totally destroyed. Let me emphasize — totally. The doctors had left and in-patient medical institutions had ceased to exist. What could be done in this situation? The treatment centers along the main railroad lines have begun to be restored. Our armed forces are providing great assistance here. Military-medical detachments and special battalions have been formed. Steps are being taken to shift the center of gravity of such concerns onto civilian organizations. In the past three years vaccination of the population had not been carried out in Chechnya. Our commission had to tackle this problem too. Now the situation is more or less stabilized. In some rayons of the republic vaccination has been completed, in others it is still in progress.

Nor can the refugee problem be ignored. Unfortunately, it is not getting any less acute. And all the most complex problems must be tackled not only on the territory of Chechnya, but outside it too. There is no end of work here.

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A few words about the restoration of the system of law- enforcement and judicial organs in the republic. A justice minister has now been appointed there, the courts are in operation in many rayons, and the attorneys' and notaries' offices and other legal organizations are in operation. The Russian Federation deputy minister of justice is in Chechnya all the time, coordinating all the legal questions.

From the very first hours of our commission's work, the main principle adopted as a basis was: the maximum objectivity, the truth no matter how bitter. A report came in, for instance, that Dudayev and his supporters were using certain chemical reagents banned by international conventions. The commission enlisted experts and carefully checked all the facts, and the necessary expert reports were drawn up. The outcome was that we told all the public: Dudayev's supporters are not using any chemical weapons.

We are trying to convey information on events in Chechnya to the world public with a full measure of objectivity. At a session of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Standing Council I described the existing situation frankly. A decision was adopted, two points of which I would like to mention. They illustrate this prestigious European body's attitude toward the Chechen crisis. The first point notes that the situation in the region can be normalized solely on condition that the immutability of the principle of the territorial integrity and unity of the Russian Federation is taken into account. Separatism is not supported by the world community, because the Chechen syndrome is not only characteristic of Russia — similar problems exist in Britain, France, Canada, and other states.

The second point in the OSCE decision declared: The solution to the Chechen Republic crisis lies solely through respect for the Russian Constitution. That is the stance of a prestigious international organization, the OSCE.

Our commission is extremely interested in letting the world know the whole truth about what is happening. The OSCE put a request to us to be allowed to set up a permanent mission in the Chechen Republic. We carefully studied this proposal and came to the conclusion that this initiative should not be obstructed. We have nothing to hide, let the whole world know the truth. And if an international organization has decided it wants to observe what is happening, it should operate not just anywhere, but in Groznyy, so as to see events from the inside. We helped to set up the permanent mission, and it is in operation. That is, the situation is being monitored not only by our commission, but also at international level.

And another question that is constantly raised in the mass media. This is the Russian president's edict under which the composition of the commission was changed somewhat. Sergey Adamovich Kovalev was removed. But I emphasize that he left at his own wish. He stated in this connection that he is willing to cooperate in every way both with the commission and with me as its chairman. So there is no need to whip up political passions over this event.

Luzhkov To Run Again for Moscow Mayor

LD1705184195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1559 GMT 17 May 95

[By Alexander Romanov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov said he would like to continue work at his post and would announce his candidacy in the next mayoral elections.

Luzhkov, who is on visit to Beijing, told Itar-Tass that he would not run for anything else.

Any structure in Russia has the right to form pre-election blocs. Those who seek for stability in the country should unite. Any political structure has this right. Consolidation should result in such systems of state government that would stabilise the society but not destroy it, the mayor noted.

Moscow's government is a nonpolitical system. However, this does not prevent from assuming some attitude or other towards various political structures, parties and movements. If their goals correspond to the Moscow government's priorities, the government will support them. Moscow's government seeks for stability, development and creation, Luzhkov said.

The bloc "Our home is Russia" and the second new bloc which is yet to be named favour stability, development of the society, strengthening of the statehood, and both economic discipline and public order. According to the mayor, Moscow's government would not join the two blocs but would support them.

Power Cuts Affect Strategic Bases in Arkhangelsk Region

LD1705164895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1348 GMT 17 May 95

[By Vladimir Anufriyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ARKHANGEL, May 17 (Itar-Tass) - A tough electricity economy regime was

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clamped down on Arkhangel region today. To start with, the "Arkhenergo" joint-stock society has cut off power supply for four days to all the industrial enterprises of the region, including the installations of the Plesetsk cosmodrome and enterprises of the State Nuclear Submarines Building Centre in Severodvinsk. The residential areas of Arkhangel are being left without electricity for 2-4 hours daily. This is due to the critical shortage of fuel at local power-generating enterprises. There is only a 24-hour stock of mazut [heating oil] at the local heat and power station, the only one in Arkhangel.

According to "Arkhenergo" Director-General Vladimir Samodov, no fuel was being received here and, therefore, the Arkhangel power and heat plant had to be switched over to a self-subsistence regime. This is a repetition of the grave energy crisis that struck the region last October-November. The reason is the same — defaulted payments. The consumers now owe the power workers more than 240 billion roubles. Therefore, the latter have no money to buy the needed fuel. The power industry of the region is being torpedoed, in fact, by the Severodvinsk military-industrial complex, to which the state stubbornly refuses to pay the money owed for the fulfilled defence orders.

In light of this situation, the regional administration was compelled to take tough measures — all the cisterns with mazut, arriving in the region, irrespective of the addressee, will henceforth be switched over to power-generating enterprises.

Further on Arkhangelsk Power Cuts

LD1705202395 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The storage tanks at the Arkhangelsk heat and power plant are empty once again. An energy crisis is again taking hold in the region. On the orders of Pavel Balakshin, head of the administration of Arkhangelsk Region, power has started to be cut off at industrial enterprises.

[Correspondent Loyter — identified by caption] [video shows submarines being repaired] The center of Russian nuclear shipbuilding was the first to be affected by the energy crisis. Its enterprises owe 112 billion rubles [R] to power engineering workers. The government's total debt to Severodvinsk stands at R740 billion. Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Council of Ministers, issued instructions on 18 April for the debts to the ship-builders to be paid off in full. But his instructions have not been carried out.

[Video shows rocket installation] The situation is no better at the Plesetsk cosmodrome. The conquerors of space are up to their eyes in debt. Cutting off power at the cosmodrome could jeopardize not only Russian but also international space programs.

[Video shows urban scenes] But the residents of the two biggest cities in the region have proved to be the main hostages. There has been no heating or hot water in hospitals, children's homes, nurseries, schools or apartment blocks for a long time. And the weather is still cold. Spring has not yet come to the north.

[P. Balakshin, head of administration of Arkhangelsk region - identified by caption] If we need Severodvinsk, if we need defense enterprises, if we need cosmodromes, then let us maintain them and let us work.

Novosibirsk Citizens Polled on 'Internal Enemies'

954F2283A Novosibirsk VECHERNIY NOVOSIBIRSK in Russian 10 May 95 p 11

[Report by Konstantin Bunakov and Igor Turchin, press group of the Center for Analytical Research SOTSIUM: "Over the Wall Lives a Neighbor—Is He an 'Enemy of the People' or Not?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Several days ago we acquainted the reader with studies conducted by sociologists of the Siberian Personnel Center and Center for Analytical Research SOTSIUM on the topic "The Image of the Enemy, as the People of Novosibirsk See It," — whom do our countrymen consider the external enemy? Today we invite the reader's attention to the second part of the study, this portion being dedicated to "internal enemies"....

The second Russian "fear," coming after external attack, is the threat of civil war (August 1991, October 1993, Chechnya, and conflicts in the former Soviet republics show that anything is possible in "this" country). Some 43 percent of respondents believe that civil war in Russia is virtually inevitable, while 34 percent entirely exclude such a possibility and 22 percent have not made up their mind. Forty-one percent of those surveyed believe the situation in society is indeed tense, while it causes feelings of anxiety for 36 percent, and only 14 percent consider it completely normal (these are chiefly "new Russians").

To the question "What in your opinion is stirring up the situation in the country?" 33 percent cited the mass media, while 29 percent pointed to the Russian Government itself. From 13 to 16 percent of those surveyed specifically accuse Communists, democrats, national-patriots, and deputies.

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Novosibirsk citizens have an interesting view of the events of October 1993—40 percent of them expressed opposition to the granting of amnesty to defenders of the White House, 33 percent approved such amnesty, and 26 percent found it difficult to respond. The largest number of opponents to amnesty—35 percent—were businessmen. It is remarkable that 41 percent of citizens with low income do not consider the mutinous parliamentarians criminals at all, while 44 percent of the businessmen surveyed consider the action against Yeltsin to be nothing short of criminal. The businessmen's response is understandable—they more than anyone else underwent terror during those black October days. But the reasoning of those who oppose amnesty is also interesting—if the president was going to arrest the insurgents, he should be consistent. Retreating somewhat, he seemed to admit the unfairness of his prior response and acknowledged the actions of the parliamentarians who rose against him as coerced...

The last seven or eight years of social life in Russia have been characterized by a negative attitude toward Communists. They have been accused of all our misfortunes. Today we have crossed the peak of this rejection. From 50 to 70 percent (depending on age and social categories) of the Novosibirsk people we surveyed show a normal or indifferent attitude towards the present-day activity of Communists. Only within the milieu of entrepreneurs (chiefly merchants) has a steadily hostile attitude been observed toward Communist organizations.

Also interesting is the attitude of Novosibirsk people towards the so-called "national-patriotic" movements and organizations.

Some 28 percent of respondents relate negatively to them, while 22 percent show a positive attitude and the remaining 50 percent are virtually indifferent. It is notable that 27 percent of the non-Russian respondents are entirely positive in their attitude towards Russian "nationals," believing that they are fighting for the rebirth of the Russian people.

But what about the Russian people of Novosibirsk themselves? Here things are turned around. Some 26 percent believe that such organizations are harmful first and foremost to Russians themselves and provoke a response of nationalism in non-Russian people. While 21 percent of the Russian respondents believe the national-patriotic movement is facilitating the spiritual and ethnic revival of the Russian people.

It is remarkable that 15 percent of all the individuals surveyed feel that civil war is being unleashed by... Novosibirsk radio and television! Almost 19 percent of the non-Russian population of Novosibirsk believe this is precisely the case. In this regard, the majority of people surveyed cited a broadcast such as Six Hundred Seconds With the Motherland as being extremist and inflammatory.

In recent times we have been prone to accusing Jews and Masons of any and every misfortune. Today we see a sharp change in such attitudes—only 7 percent of those surveyed believe in a Masonic plot against Russia. But the situation is more complicated with regard to people of the Caucasus. Some 16 percent of Russians are hostile towards them, 43 percent are unfriendly, and only 32 percent of those surveyed are more or less tolerant of them. Some 23 percent of respondents of non-Russian heritage complained of a hostile attitude toward them on the part of Russians, while only 15 percent of Russian respondents sense an inimical attitude from other ethnic groups.

With respect to religion, matters appear to be proceeding normally, thank God. Some 58 percent of those surveyed displayed a commendable tolerance of people of other faiths, while 34 percent expressed respect for them.

Analysis of the data obtained during the course of our studies enables us to reach the conclusion that the reasons behind the hostility, dissension, and strife we see being propagated in society do not in fact have an ethnic, religious, or party foundation, but are rather based on social stratification, assets inequality, and differences in income. For example, 55 percent of the pensioners surveyed, 49 percent of the people with a high school education, and 37 percent of the respondents of average age and low income display an extremely inimical attitude towards businessmen. When asked "Would you like to become a businessman yourself?", 60 percent of the Novosibirsk citizens surveyed replied negatively.

People are more prone to seek external rather than internal reasons for their personal failures. All the more deserving of respect is the individual who is unable to surmount surrounding circumstances, but overcomes his own failings. In perfecting himself, he joins thousands of others like him in gradually, inconspicuously improving his country, compelling the authority above him to change and improve, along with society as a whole.

When asked "Who is to blame for what is going on today in Russia?", 31 percent of respondents stated directly: "We ourselves...."

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Irkutsk Branch of 'Russia Is Our Home' Formed

MM1705135295 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 May 95 First Edition p 2

[Report by Yelena Chmelik: "Confederates Gather Together"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Irkutsk — An organizational meeting of the Irkutsk branch of the "Russia Is Our Home" All-Russia Public Movement has been held in Irkutsk.

People with sometimes diametrically opposed interests — ranging from the leaders of the oblast's major enterprises and entrepreneurs to cultural figures and even the hetman of the East Siberian Cossack Host — became members of the movement and confederates. Vice Governor Vladimir Yakovenko voiced the general mood by saying that the time is past when the oblast administration distanced itself from politics. It is time to state one's political intentions.

Sakha President Writes on Federal Treaty

954F2253A Yakutsk RESPUBLIKA SAKHA in Russian 31 Mar 95 pp 1-2

[Article by M. Nikolayev, president of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia): "The Federal Treaty and Russia's Statehood"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The third anniversary of the signing of the Treaty Differentiating the Terms of Reference and Authority of Federal Organs of State Power and the Organs of State Power of Components of the Russian Federation has just been reached. Looking back over the path trodden and recalling all the peripeteias of the preparation, discussion, and signing of the Federal Treaty, one recognizes the enormous significance of this document for the destiny of the Russian Federation. The Federal Treaty laid the foundations for the renewal of the Russian Federation and the reconstitution of the Russian state based on the unity of the historically evolved territory and the multinational society.

It could not have been otherwise. The democratization of social processes in Russia at the turn of the nineties and the collapse of the ideology of centrism and unitarism in the country's domestic policy that it occasioned led against the background of the growth of national self-awareness to changes in the official status of the national-state and national-territorial formations. I would observe, however, that aspirations to national separatism and ethnicization in social relations in the national formations lauded to the skies by certain petty-politicking epigones, which had been carefully concealed earlier, were manifested particularly strongly in these years and on the eve of the signing of the Federal Treaty. At that same time, the apologists for the country's "provincization" and the elimination of the national formations in Russia, scrupulously calculating the correlation of "indigenous" and "nonindigenous" peoples in the sovereign multinational republics, rushed to the other extreme. This is being heard frequently at this time also.

The amplitude, depth of content, and the philosophy of internationalism of the Federal Treaty made it possible to secure a balance of the interests of each type of component of the Federation and to preserve Russia as a multinational and integral state.

Without the treaty, Yakutia would simply not have acquired genuine statehood and would not have had an economic base for the realization of self-government—property. Nor would it have had the base of any statehood—its own legal system. Yet quite recently even trifling questions of the administrative-territorial arrangement were decided in Moscow. Yakutia was a raw material appendage of a vast empire, a remote outlying district of it, in which the departmental diktat of the Union ministries flourished.

At the decisive turn of society's development, we moved to revise the official status of our republic. Let idle politicians reiterate the hackneyed "sovereignty parade" phrase. The multinational people of Yakutia exercised their inalienable right to self-determination. We were in at the start of the birth of a new sovereign state—the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), a full component of the Russian Federation. Statehood in the republic appeared thanks to its common destiny with Russia.

We recall the recent past. Our republic took an concerned and responsible part in the process of preparation and discussion of the drafts of the Federal Treaty. While proclaiming the idea of the state sovereignty of our republic and speaking of guarantees of its economic independence, we recognized that the formation of genuine statehood was possible merely with the precise delimitation (on a treaty basis) of authority between the federal organs of state power and the organs of power of the sovereign republics.

In the most adverse, and at times dramatic, situations, when the fate of the Federal Treaty hung by a thread, representatives of the republic firmly stated their commitment to the idea of the preservation of the historically evolved state unity of the peoples of the Russian Federation. We had been prepared, for that matter, to sign the Union Treaty in August 1991 also, but the flywheel of politicians' centrifugal ambitions had already gathered momentum, and, as a result, the Union collapsed.

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Nothing in life is forever. The republics that had acquired their statehood as autonomies, negotiating a particular phase of development, renounced this form. Some of them are in mutual relations with Russia seeking other approaches. We believe that, considering the historically evolved ties, the particular features of geopolitical position, the level of development of state institutions, and the socioeconomic and cultural potential of the components of the Russian Federation, this is how it should be. We see no manifestations of separatism here. On the contrary, crisis is caused by the reluctance of certain politicians to accept the constitutional and treaty principles of the Russian Federation. Thus, the policy of confrontation adopted by the Chechen leadership three years ago and its rejection of the Federal Treaty led to tragedy. On the other hand, the positive experience of the constitutional and treaty association of states and administrative- territorial and national-territorial formations taken into consideration and assimilated by the Republic of Tatarstan afforded it an opportunity to build its relations with Russia on the basis of the harmonization and interaction of the two constitutions.

For the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) the main constitutional and democratic model of Russia's state arrangement is the idea of real federalism. It was made the basis of the republic's Declaration of State Sovereignty. Its constitution, which enshrines the fact that the republic, realizing the principles of the voluntary approach and equality, is on the basis of the Federal Treaty a component of the Russian Federation and voluntarily transfers some of the sovereign rights that belong to it to the jurisdiction of federal organs of state power, is built on the principles of federalism.

The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was firmly for the idea of the unification of Russia on the basis of the Federal Treaty. Together with other components of the Federation, we were able to bring it to the point of logical formalization. The document is of exceptional legal significance—the Federal Treaty was not only signed but also, in accordance with the wishes of the components of the Russian Federation, became an integral part of its Basic Law in the 1992 version and subsequently in the text of the new Constitution.

The principle of constitutional and treaty relations between the federal organs of state power and the organs of state power of the components of the Federation has been made the basis of the paradigm of real federalism in Russia. The obvious contradiction to be found in the content of the section concluding the Basic Law of the Russian Federation of the provision concerning the supremacy of the Constitution of the Federation over the Federal Treaty is puzzling, therefore. The illogicality of this constitutional provision is striking—after all, it essentially cancels out the basic provisions of the Federal Treaty incorporated in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The introduction in the Basic Law of a provision downplaying the legal significance of the Federal Treaty and also the disregard for the protocol to the Federal Treaty agreed by representatives of the republics within the Russian Federation were a reaction to the Federal Treaty's alleged enshrinement of the "inequality" of the components of the Federation inspired by the statement of representatives of 40 krays and oblasts in June 1993.

Nonetheless, the Federal Treaty, which was signed, as we all know, on the basis of a consensus of the parties, played a significant part in the consolidation and achievement of the general accord of the components of the Russian Federation and enshrined the basic principles on whose foundation mutual relations between the center and the regions are being built.

It is practically impossible to illustrate the political and legal results of the signing of the Federal Treaty and its significance for the fate of the components of the Russian Federation in a single article. We will note merely the most fundamental.

The first: If we proceed from the fact that at the present time federalism is linked with problems of interethnic contradictions, the Federal Treaty is a guarantee of their resolution. It proceeds from the right of the nations to self-determination recorded in international human rights pacts. The Federal Treaty makes it possible to take account of national singularities of the development of individual republics within a unified state. We may on the basis of the Federal Treaty maintain that the national-state formations within the Russian Federation preserve their original essence. The attempts to eliminate them on the pretext of territorial reconstitution, on the other hand, are impermissible and contrary to the rules of international law.

The second: A most important point in the enshrinement of federalism in the reformed Russian statehood is the recognition of the sovereignty of the republics. The republics exercise their sovereign right to state independence on a treaty basis, by way of the delegation of some of their authority to the federal organs of state power. This is essentially federalism from below. I would note that this could not have happened under the former conditions of the totalitarian system. The positive aspect of such mutual relations performs a constructive role in practice. On the one hand, the components of the Federation express a renunciation of separatism and centrifugal aspirations. On the other, the federal

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authorities express a renunciation of unitarism, centrism, and an aspiration to diktat.

The third: A most fundamental issue for each people is the problem of property. Property relations are inseparably connected with sovereign human rights. A greater humiliation for the feeling of national dignity than to have deprived nations and nationalities of the right to possess, enjoy, and dispose of the entire property that is an integral part of their habitable environment could not be devised. But it was such an attitude toward the values of general community living which was predominant in the administrative-command system for many years. The components of the Federation found an opportunity to rid themselves of such an unequal situation only thanks to the Federal Treaty. For on its basis the republics are recognized as the proprietors of the primordial lands and their interior, waters, forests, and other natural resources.

The fourth: The Federal Treaty proceeds from the principle of recognition and observance of the separation of power horizontally and vertically. This path, tried and tested by many countries, corresponds to the demands of the times and the aims of the exercise of genuine equality in relations between components of the Federation.

The Federal Treaty has become the basis of comprehension of the essence of the delimitation of terms of reference and authority between the federal and republic organs of state power. The precise delineation of competence means progress toward a strengthening of the independence of the components of the Federation and the formation of a unified, integral federative state.

The fifth: The Federal Treaty recognizes the republics as states and, in fact, takes as a guide the Declaration on State Sovereignty of the Russian Federation and the declarations on state sovereignty of the republics within the Russian Federation. It manifests a respect for the history, traditions, culture and language, and national dignity of the peoples of the Russian Federation.

The sixth and most important: Having concluded the Federal Treaty, we averted the disintegration of the Russian Federation and preserved it as a unified, integral state.

The Federal Treaty legally enshrined the content of the constitutional system of Russia as a federative state and decided conceptually the question of the composition of the components of the Russian Federation. It finds an acceptable correlation between the rights of the territories and the rights of the national-state formations. The treaty determined the reference points in the choice of the diversity of ideologies, the basis of which were the principles of real federalism as a counterweight to the ideology of unitarism, inordinate centralization, totalitarianism, chiefism, and the monopoly of power of the one-party system. And, further, it enshrined the idea of the preservation and development of a united community of subjects and internationalism, which is deeply rooted in the history of Russia. The federative arrangement here means the decentralization of government and the priority of the regions in the accomplishment of their tasks.

It is hard to exaggerate the significance of the Federal Treaty for the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Its signing brought closer the adoption of the constitution of our republic. Now we have a constitution free of ideological dogma. The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is a sovereign and democratic state based on the rule of law and the right of the people to self-determination.

Radical economic reform is at this time a reality, there is no alternative. But its results cannot be viewed one-sidedly—merely as a consequence of the exacerbation of the economic situation. Account also needs to be taken of the fact that the crisis phenomena are reflected in the economy of Yakutia in exaggerated fashion and that they are more acute here than in the central regions of Russia. This depends on the giant credit-intensiveness of the republic's economy and the seasonal nature of the importation of the bulk of material resources and consumer goods. Considering these circumstances, we initiated comprehensive economic transformations in the republic's national economy, primarily in the sphere of financial and tax policy. We secured the introduction of a charge for nonrenewable natural resources and perfected the tax and credit system and relations between the federal and republic budgets.

We undertook a reform of the budget system and changed the structure of the budget fundamentally. Earmarked funds were formed: for the social protection of the populace and the support of peasant farms and research and currency, diamond, and gold reserves of the republic. We simultaneously developed guidelines of a stabilization of the economy and transition to market relations.

A number of fundamental documents was signed in the wake of the Federal Treaty regulating relations between the governments of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on economic matters, the delimitation of state property, and priority measures for realization of the Federal Treaty in the republic and support for the activity of the population in the winter period.

A characteristic manifestation of the mutual relations within the Russian Federation based on the principles

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of the Federal Treaty was the elaboration and approval in January 1995 of the Federal Program of Socioeconomic Development of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as an aggregate of priority tasks providing for the mobilization of financial, credit, material, and other types of resources for the structural reorganization of the republic's economy.

The program takes account of federal and regional interests in the transport infrastructure, power engineering, and mining industry. Thus, the installation of the Berkatit-Tommot-Yakutsk main railroad will make it possible to sharply reduce federal spending on the seasonal delivery of freight to the republic and will reduce inflationary pressure on the economy. The system of year-round motor highways together with the railroad will link the northeast region of Russia with the diamond and oil and gas province of Western Yakutia and ensure the uninterrupted material and technical supply of Magadan Oblast and the gold-mining enterprises of Eastern Yakutia. The development of the fuel and energy complex will alleviate the electric power, coal, oil, and gas shortage in the Far East.

The significance of the program is determined also by Yakutia's particular geopolitical role in the system of Russia's strategic and foreign policy interests.

In 1994 we achieved not only a stabilization of industrial production, but also a 1 percent growth over 1993.

The first pronounced results of the economic policy that we are pursuing have emerged this year. Industrial production in January- February 1995 increased 9.7 percent. This is one of the highest indicators in the Russian Federation. The first signs of a growth of industrial production and stabilization attesting the soundness of the course of reforms for which we have opted have appeared.

The structural reorganization of the economy is under way and a hitherto unknown branch—the manufacture of brilliants—has been created. Manufacturing industry and consumer goods production are developing. The personal homestead and private farms, many of which are taking the path of joint labor, is becoming a decisive factor in the agro-industrial complex.

The republic has announced its presence in the international arena in earnest. This includes both participation in UNESCO activities and a set of initiatives and practical work along the lines of the Northern Forum international nongovernmental organization and cultural exchanges.

We are known as a dependable and worthy partner in trade and economic relations. Today we have relations with almost 50 countries of the world. But this is just the beginning. Realization of the ideas that we have put forward for a revival of the northern sea route, the establishment of polar air routes, the creation of an International Bank for the Reconstruction and Development of the Arctic, and the formation of an Arctic Academy of Sciences would raise the life of the population in the northern regions to a qualitatively new level.

The time is ripe for practical study of the internal arrangement of the Russian state, for attention to be paid to each part of it, and for the elaboration and painstaking implementation of a new regional policy in place of one deformed at the turning points of history. What is understood by regions here is not only the territory of a specific component of the Federation in its administrative boundaries, but more extensive economic and geographical zones with specific natural and socioeconomic conditions exerting an appreciable influence on production efficiency and the living standard of the population.

The disruption of the former, established ties between regions and the loss of most important industries and lines of communication demand a new look primarily at the economic map of Russia. Changes on it as a consequence of qualitative transformation and the shift of this center of gravity or the other to entirely new points are inevitable. This, I believe, is the entire essence of future state policy: the creation of a new integral system of an efficient economy and assurance of the full-blooded activity of the population of all regions of the country.

The economic, social, and political need for the consideration of regional singularities conditions the regional approach. Its nucleus lies in recognition of the existence of a diversity of local singularities, interests, and requirements and the differentiation of the methods and modes of their satisfaction. Judge for yourselves. The diversity of the natural conditions on the vast territory of the Russian Federation does not remain constant. On account of the environmental disruptions, the depletion of land fertility and mineral and raw material resources, and other changes in the natural productive forces caused by the intensification of the negative impact of the anthropogenic factor on the environment, regional differences are progressing. Whence an assignment which should be tackled by state regional policy—the creation of conditions conducive to people's life sustenance compensating for the negative influence of regional factors.

The crisis phenomena in the transition to the market economy are intensifying the socioeconomic differences between the regions. The northern and eastern regions

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of the country, which had a low starting socioeconomic level and a structure of the economy not adapted to market relations, found themselves in the worst position. This does not need to be proved. The mass outflow of the population from them to the European part of Russia and certain countries of the near abroad is a social indicator of the depressed state of the northern and eastern regions. Problems of the surmounting of the socioeconomic lag and the equalization of the levels of the well- being of the population in the regions confront regional policy in all their inevitability.

The clearly expressed seasonal nature of activity in the North needs to be borne in mind also. The mining enterprises operate seasonally, the transport system functions seasonally. The organization of the early delivery of freight has become a most acute problem. Unless we learn to tackle these tasks in state-minded fashion, we will encounter the conclusive dismantling of the system of early delivery that existed earlier without having created any alternative structures. In this case, the process of the decline in production in the North could assume wholesale proportions, and the problem of the life sustenance of the northerners would become even more acute.

Of course, the North is becoming unattractive for the location of productive forces and the development of the socioeconomic infrastructure. The opportunities for the creation of new jobs are limited and the market dictates its conditions more strongly here. But compare the expenditure needed on the one hand for maintaining production and, on the other, for winding it down and for people's mass resettlement. The resulting savings are manifestly not in favor of the abandonment of the exploitation of very rich mineral and raw material resources. The fee for life under the extreme conditions of the North is high. But we should not forget that the very rich mineral and raw material resources of the North are a natural reservation not only of our Federation but also a sphere of interests of the entire world community within the foreseeable future. The development of concepts and a long-term strategy of the assimilation of Russia's northern territories and the enlistment in commerce of the natural resources based on the general forecast of resource consumption in world society will be of special significance in this respect.

The Federal Treaty and the Constitution of the Russian Federation attribute the establishment of the general principles of the organization of local government to the joint jurisdiction of the federal organs of state power and the organs of the state power of the Federation. On subjects of joint jurisdiction, the federal organs of state power issue fundamentals and federal laws, and the organs of state power of components of the Federation exercise in accordance with them their own legal regulation, including the adoption of laws and other law-making instruments. Such is the procedure established in the Federal Treaty and the Basic Law of the Russian Federation.

A reform of local government is being undertaken in our republic, as throughout Russia. The traditions of communal self-government have been strong in Yakutia since the olden days. Land institutions were elected and operated in the period 1917-1920, and there is a wealth of original experience of self-government in the local administrative-territorial entities—the naslegs. We are closely following the experience of the organization of local government in territorial communities in countries of the near and far abroad. The principles and priorities of the European Charter of Local Government signed in Strasbourg in 1985 are attractive in their focus on assurance of the rights of man and citizen. We intend to use this wealth of experience of the organization of local government, combining to the maximum our own historical experience and the best traditions and achievements of scientific thought and world civilization.

A wide diversity of views on a resolution of the problems of the organization of local government in components of the Federation has been revealed in the course of the reform of local government in the Russian Federation. It has become clear that the formation of local government on a Federation scale will be lengthy and complex. On account of the center's delay over the formulation of federative legal foundations of the organization of local government, many regions have been forced into normative regulation in this sphere of relations. This will entail in the future legal conflicts in the system of federative local government legislation.

Federal conflict of laws is in accordance with the Federal Treaty and the Constitution a subject of the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. It is essential to develop this branch of legislation. The emergence of a new scientific direction—legal conflict study— is reassuring, but it exists merely at the doctrinal level as yet. A legal mechanism for conflict settlement within a federative legal system is needed. Together with the Federal Treaty's establishment of the practices in the application of conciliation procedures and the hearing of disputes in the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, the introduction in practice of the temporary legal regulation by the components of the Russian Federation of subjects of joint jurisdiction until the corresponding federal acts have been adopted, with the subsequent immediate alignment with them of the adopted acts, is becoming an urgent issue.

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The Federal Treaty is an event of international proportions and an experience of democratic constitutional development of permanent significance. It is essential to develop the provisions of the Federal Treaty as much as possible and to realize them in the elaboration of new national policy.

We must all understand that the formation of new statehood in the Russian Federation on the hard-won principles of the world community and our own experience of historical development is the common cause of the federal organs of state power of the Russian Federation, the components of multinational Russia, and all Russians.

Economic Issues

Aide Previews Presidential Budget Message

LD1805072395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0645 GMT 18 May 95

[By Oleg Velichko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow May 18 (Itar-Tass) — The basic orientations of a 1996 budgetary policy are to be discussed at a Russian government meeting on Thursday.

In the opinion of Presidential aide Aleksandr Livshits, business taxes are expected to get lower in 1996, and budget deficit is expected to be kept at four percent of Gross Domestic Product.

Livshits said work is in progress on the preparation of a 1996 Presidential budget message. He said the budgetary message is a kind of political assignment to the government in preparing a 1996 budget.

The government members are also to discuss Russia's pensions system reform concept.

Davydov Says Debt Payment to London Club on Track

MK1705123095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Russian Federation Pays London Club $250 Million in Debts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Oleg Davydov, Russian Federation foreign economic relations minister, has announced that Russia has already paid the London Club $250 million out of the $500 million in debts payable this year. The vice premier set the record straight, saying the sum in point is the interest for 1992-1993 as well as for 1994. The country's total debt to this creditor banks club amounts to $25 billion. In Mr. Davydov's words, the payments are made in full correspondence with the defined schedule, and, by July, Russia will have fully honored its obligations in servicing its debt in the current year.

Yasin Hopes To Keep Inflation at 2-3 Percent Monthly

LD1705155595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1529 GMT 17 May 95

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — The most pessimistic forecasts indicate that inflation should not exceed four to five per cent this summer, according to Russian Minister of Economics Yevgeniy Yasin.

In an interview with Itar-Tass on Wednesday, Yasin said the biggest challenge will be to keep inflation on that level through the autumn in order to avoid a new spiral of price rises that Russia saw last year. Optimistic forecasts put inflation at two to three per cent a month, he said.

Yasin believes it possible to avoid a traditional autumnal increase in inflation. He pointed out that last year, the increase was caused by the fact that control over money supply slackened after the first quarter of the year. In addition, the Central Bank did not provide the Ministry of Economics with information on money supply, which also had a negative impact on the efforts to stabilise prices.

This information was inaccessible even for the majority of Central Bank employees last year, he added.

"Today we have all information we need and I can say that if the government continues its tight fiscal policy and if we prevent money printing to finance the budget deficit and avoid excessive interventions on the hard currency market to buy hard currency as it happened last April, inflation this summer and autumn will grow slowly and smoothly, by about three to four per cent a month on the average," Yasin said.

New Customs Duty Rates To Fuel Inflation

MM1805142995 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Article by Igor Andreyev: "New Customs Duty Rates Will Cause a New Price Hike"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation Government has issued a decree approving the new rates of customs import duties on all commodities imported into the country. Although it will now cost less than before to import many of them, the duties on others have gone

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up so steeply that the overall balance is clearly in the direction of making more rigid the customs barrier for foreign products coming to us. This, in the opinion of experts, will inevitably lead to increased inflation.

Customs duties on individual types of technological equipment (for example, for bottling mineral waters and other nonalcoholic beverages), on substances for the pharmaceutical industry, and on other groups of commodities have been lowered as of 10 May. There is a certain indulgence for importers of computers and "peripherals" for them (10-15 percent of the customs value) and also of spare parts for this kind of electronics (5 percent of the customs value).

The rate increase being introduced 1 July (the six-week time-out is, understandably, being granted to entrepreneurs in order either to reconcile themselves to the loss of money or to tear up contracts) will affect a far wider range of imports. Customs registration will be more expensive and, consequently, there will be an increase in the wholesale and retail prices of finished meat products, of masses of commodities that hide under the general heading of "consumer goods" (textiles, footwear, furniture), and, again, of individual types of technological equipment (bulldozers, for example).

On the whole, the importation into Russia of all that it needs will now cost importers 13-15 percent of the customs value of what is being brought across the border, compared with the previous 9-11 percent.

Contrary to the hopes of motorists and the rumors that have filtered into the press that the import duty on cars is being reduced, everything in this sphere will remain as before. In preparing the appropriate rates, the specialists believed that it would, nonetheless, cost less to import cars because of the reduction or complete abolition of excise duty, which today stands at 30-70 percent of the customs value of the purchase, depending on the engine's capacity. In the end, excise duty and VAT (20 percent) will continue to be levied as before, while the [import] duty will remain at the rate of five ECU's for each cubic centimeter of the engine's capacity.

As we see, the actual principle, which is hard to explain from commonsense positions, of levying duty not on the customs value of a car being imported into the country but depending on the horsepower it develops has gone unchanged. In other words, the customs regards as equal someone who has bought for $3,000 a used foreign car with a 2.5-liter engine and someone who importa a brand-new limousine with an equally powerful engine, but a luxury car costing 10-20 times more. As previously, the state sees no difference between someone who has acquired just one car for his own needs and a businessman bringing in batches of cars to be sold at a good "markup."

The experts involved in setting the new customs rates explain that the reason for this equality, which is just as hard to explain, is very simple — fierce pressure on the government and the customs from Russian car manufacturers. But also from certain lobbyists protecting the interests of producers of other commodities, including foodstuffs, who had not previously encountered problems selling them. The specialists say that who prevailed in this struggle can clearly be seen from the way the draft new rates for customs import duties were altered and transformed and what final form they assumed. It reflects not so much some compromise between the interests of the commodities' producers, importers, and consumers as a power equilibrium between the leviathans of Russian industry and the major suppliers of foreign products to the country.

Central Bank Prime Rate Set at 195 Percent Per Annum

MM1705151395 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Bank of Russia Press Service report: "Credit Rate Is 195 Percent"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Central Bank's prime rate for commercial banks is being set at 195 percent per annum from 16 May 1995. The interest rate for existing credit agreements is unchanged. In this connection paragraph 2 of Central Bank of Russia telegram No. 143-94 of 19 June 1994 does not apply pending the issuing of special instructions.

New Federal Bonds Aimed at Covering Budget Deficit

MK1805134095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Russian Federation Announces the Issue of Federal Debt Bonds"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has signed a government decree "On General Conditions of the Issue and Circulation of Federal Debt Bonds." The signing of this document enables the Finance Ministry to launch the issue of new state securities to ensure the non-inflationary coverage of the state budget deficit. Among such securities the Finance Ministry intends to issue Gold Certificates: gold-backed paper.

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Commission Examines Raising Budget Revenues From Alcohol

LD1705222895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2002 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — The Russian government's Ad Hoc Commission on Improvement of the Payment and Settlement System held a meeting in Moscow Wednesday. Chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays, the meeting discussed ways to increase budget revenue from the domestic market for alcoholic beverages and through auditing settlements for export of oil and petroleum products.

A commission press release also notes that the speakers on the first issue (alcohol) emphasized that illegal production and import accounted for about 40 percent of the market. The press release confirms the need to protect both the Russian producers and consumers from substandard vodka flooding the market. Such vodka is manufactured in underground factories and supplied at dumping prices. It emphasizes that the harm done to people's health, honest producers and the state budget must be answered with the toughest response available.

As a first step, customs duty exemptions for imported alcoholic beverages were lifted. The speakers at the meeting said that this kind of import has to be brought under control. Import stamps are being introduced for that purpose. The press release says that the commission supported the proposal under which the difference has to be collected in excise duties levied on vodka imported from "near abroad" (former Soviet republics) when the excise duty in the country of origin is below the Russian one. The speakers emphasized that in 1989 the revenue from alcoholic drinks accounted for 4.3 percent of the gross domestic product while in 1994, 0.85 percent to 1 percent. The commission decided to take this issue up again next September.

The commission agreed that an enormous amount of potential revenue is lost because hard-currency proceeds escape taxation. A decision was made to set up a system in the framework of the State Customs Committee for pre-customs control of the oil quality and the amount to be exported. The goal is to obtain independent impartial information on raw commodities and, especially, the amounts to be exported, the press release said.

The commission decided to tighten pre-customs control of oil and petroleum product supplies abroad.

Treasury Said Badly Hurt by Illegal Liquor Trade

MK1805113095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Bekker: "The State Reinstates Its Monopoly Over Alcohol. Liquor Smuggling Causes Huge Losses to the Budget"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the U.S. Customs Service, liquor smuggling brings the highest profits after drug smuggling. Russia's experience fully corroborates the conclusion by specialists across the ocean. Addressing yesterday's session of the government Operational Commission on Streamlining the System of Payments and Settlements, Anatoliy Chubays said that the treasury is sustaining colossal damages from the loss of the state monopoly on alcohol production. Last year, budgets at all levels lost 50 trillion rubles, Deputy Economy Minister Sergey Ignatyev specified. This resulted from the illegal import of liquor, which proceeded under the cover of the now abolished presidential edict on granting a number of public organizations customs duty exemptions.

Underground moonshine production within the country has increased sharply. With the annual level of alcohol consumption in Russia at 200 million decaliters, 30-50 million, according to Rosalko concern estimates, comes from the illegal, and therefore untaxed, importation and production. Compared to 1989, the vodka price has become five times cheaper with respect to the basket of main food staples. Whereas six years ago an average wage could buy 13.6 liters, in mid-1994 it could buy 41.3 liters.

Neither the abolition, as of 1 March, of customs exemptions nor the introduction of excise duty stamps has so far affected the alcohol market. Given that the customs duty on the import of one liter of vodka is established at a rate of 40,000 rubles while an imported bottle nonetheless sells at 16,000-20,000 rubles on average, it is clear that liquor is smuggled in, without taxes being paid. The situation is compounded by the fact that in world practice the excise tax is included in the budget of the alcohol- consuming country, while Russia has adopted a reverse scheme in its relations with the CIS countries: The excise tax receipts from the importation of Ukraine "gorilka" is included into the budget of Kiev, not of Moscow. The excise tax itself is lower in Russia, which makes the export of liquor here extremely lucrative, which still further undercuts the national producer: 150 distilleries.

Unfortunately, the commission stated, a new draft law on the excise duty, which partly addresses a number of questions, has got bogged down in the

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State Duma. Ultimately, the problem of restoring the state monopoly over alcohol output is being raised. To this end, it is proposed within a limited time frame to adopt government decrees on licensing and imposing quantitative limitations on the production, bottling, storage, and wholesale distribution of alcoholic beverages. Probably as of 1 July the State Customs Committee will put a barrier on liquor importation to Russia by those who have no license. Signs are that within the next few days the price of the special stamp on vodka and liquor products from the CIS countries will be raised. Furthermore, the excise duty will be extended to domestically produced ethyl alcohol and alcoholic beverages.

Domestic distillers can count on state support in acquiring the measuring equipment and automatic machines for pasting on the stamps. The program for the procurement of corresponding equipment abroad is estimated at $90 million. Because the 1995 federal budget does not envision these sums, Chubays invited the Finance Ministry to come up with compromise decisions: For instance, grant Russian enterprises temporary tax exemptions so that they can use the sums thus released to buy imported equipment.

Ministry Announces Audit of Energy Sector Enterprises

MK1805133095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Fuel and Energy Complex Will Be Subjected to Inspection"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation Fuel and Energy Ministry has announced an audit of the financial and economic performance by fuel and energy complex enterprises. Fuel and Energy Minister Yuriy Shafranik said "the state must ensure tough control over an effective use of investments and the observance of tax legislation by oil, gas, and power engineering enterprises." In May-June audits will be held at enterprises affiliated with the companies Rosneft, Yukos, Sidanko, and the joint-stock company Integrated Power Grid of Russia. The minister also said that "possibly this week" a government directive will be signed ordering verification of the observance by fuel and energy complex enterprises of a presidential edict defining corporatization principles in the oil and gas sector.

Decree on Natural Gas Exports Published

MM1705143195 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 May 95 First Edition p 3

[Decree No. 429 of the Russian Federation Government "On Natural Gas Exports in 1995," signed by V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government, in Moscow on 28 April 1995]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 2213 of 26 December 1995 "On the Regulation of Natural Gas Exports" (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 35, p 3693) the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

1. Volumes of national gas exports for federal state needs in 1995 shall be ratified in accordance with the Russian Federation's economic commitments in line with the appendix (not published).

2. As of 1 January 1995 a rate of export duty on natural gas of 2 ECU's [European Currency Units] per tonne shall be enforced in partial amendment of the Russian Federation Government Decree No. 862 of 19 July 1994 "On the Partial Amendment of Rates of Export Duty and the List of Commodities Ratified by Decree No. 1103 of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers-Government of 30 October 1993 'On the Ratification of Rates of Export Duty and the List of Commodities to Which They Are Applied'" (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, 1994, No. 14, p 1642).

[Signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

[Dated] Moscow, 28 April 1995

No. 429

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International Affairs

Envoy to United States Queried on Activities

WS1805090095 Lvov VYSOKYY ZAMOK in Ukrainian 6 May 95 p 3

[Interview with Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States Yuriy Shcherbak by Anatoliy Horokhovskyy; place and date not given: "First — Diplomacy, Then — Novels"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Horokhovskyy] One hundred days have passed since you were appointed to the high-level post of Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States. Please allow me to ask you a question: What have you managed to achieve over this short period of time?

[Shcherbak] First, thank you for recalling this date, because I somehow did not have time to think about these 100 days. Indeed, this is an important turning point in the life of every politician, in addition, it is a U.S. tradition, worthy of copying.

I began my activities with familiarizing myself with the embassy's employees. I was interested in knowing what each of them could do, and what potential abilities they had. The overwhelming majority of our embassy's employees are highly qualified experts.

Our diplomats have an extremely heavy work load. It is not difficult to see this based on figures that I am going to provide you with now. Twenty two diplomats work in the embassy representing 52 million people of Ukraine, while 86 diplomats work in the Israeli Embassy, representing a country with 5 million people.

While I met with the embassy staff, I had to clarify what is currently being done in the area of Ukrainian-U.S. relations — one of our priorities.

[Horokhovskyy] A U.S. radio broadcast that you decided to fundamentally reorganize the embassy's work. If this report is real, please tell me what is implied by it?

[Shcherbak] Improvement in the quality of our embassy's work is implied, because life now brings our attention to more difficult tasks. I, however, do not dismiss the work done by my predecessors. When I was Ukrainian ambassador to Israel, I also had to begin, as they say, from zero. Therefore, I know well what efforts had to be launched to establish and open a diplomatic mission.

I now come back to your question. There are no plans to introduce any drastic changes in the embassy. With regard to my nature, I hold moderate views, and am of a centrist orientation. Therefore, I have a reformative — not revolutionary — approach toward things. Of course, even though there will be certain changes, properly speaking, changes in the style of the embassy's work have already been introduced.

I would very much like the embassy to become a spiritual center for relations between Ukraine and the U.S. administration for holding discussions and negotiations on important issues; I would like our contacts with congressmen, representatives of business, science, and culture to strengthen.

[Horokhovskyy] You said recently that you would like to turn the embassy into a discussion club. Please, answer my question regarding this: Are you not planning to hold discussions on the two anniversary dates to be observed this year — the 50th anniversary of the end of the World War II, and of the founding of the UN?

[Shcherbak] Certainly, there is no need to prove that these events are of international importance, and therefore they will be a subject of our embassy's particular attention. I will speak briefly about each of them.

The war waged by the Soviet Union is still called the Great Patriotic War. Such a definition of the war triggers controversial opinions. The local press published articles stating that this war was not a Great Patriotic War for the Ukrainians. Therefore, this matter should be looked into with the help of both Ukrainian and U.S. historians and representatives of Ukrainian society.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the UN, there are plans to hold a conference in New York, in which, as is expected, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma will participate. We, in our turn, should recall that Ukraine was one of the UN founders, even though it was at the time a quasi-state, a semi-state, a quarter-state. Yes, whatever we say about this, Ukraine was not born to nothing; it came into the world as one of the UN state-founders.

[Horokhovskyy] As I understand, the embassy's efforts and your own efforts in particular are currently focused on strengthening Ukrainian-U.S. relations. What is your opinion with regard to these relations in the immediate future?

[Shcherbak] Considering the crisis that Ukraine is currently living through, we must expand our cooperation as much as possible. We cannot be guided by U.S. Government credits alone, because we know well the limits of the U.S. state budget. Therefore, we think that our primary task this year is to attract private investment to Ukraine's national economy. We are sure that the Ukrainian economy has great reserves for our mutual cooperation.

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[Horokhovskyy] Now I would like to ask you about the potential role of the Ukrainian diaspora both in resolving the economic crisis in Ukraine and introducing the market economy?

[Shcherbak] Your question requires a few elements to answer. It is only worth emphasizing that there are plans to take decisive steps along the path toward the implementation of economic reform this year. This, as is known, is an extremely important process that is already making itself felt ....

There are plans to privatize 26,000 industrial enterprises in 1995. Profound reform — land privatization, sharing collective farms, the establishment of a land bank, and the replacement of the agricultural procurement system — will also be introduced in the agricultural sector.

It is not difficult to understand from what I said that this year will be difficult, because there are many expectations. It should become a turning point, moreover, a decisive one.

To be short, Ukraine faces these tasks this year. Now let us think how the Ukrainian diaspora could help its homeland in practice. We cannot rely on investments, because Ukrainian-born U.S. citizens are prevailingly middle-class people and do not own great capital.

At the same time, we know that the Ukrainians hold top positions in almost all leading U.S. companies, well-known all over the world. They could represent Ukraine to their leadership and put in a good word. There is a need for this, because I repeatedly became convinced that many big U.S. businessmen have a vague image of our state and its potential capabilities.

In addition, our businessmen and economists need qualified recommendations on the part of their U.S. colleagues regarding the introduction of market relations and advanced technologies.

I am glad to state that the Western diaspora supports the policy of economic reform, initiated by the Ukrainian president. The leadership of Ukrainian organizations stated this in a memorandum, which they handed to Leonid Kuchma during their meeting in New York. [passage omitted]

Cuban Envoy Briefs on Economic Cooperation

WS1705115795 Kiev KIYEVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian 12 May 95 p 2

[Interview with Cuban Ambassador to Ukraine Sergio Lopez Brel by Tamara Hrabovska; place and date not given: "Cuba Is Starting Life Afresh" — first paragraph is KIYEVSKIYE NOVOSTI introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Sergio Lopez Brel, Cuban ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Ukraine, has assumed his duties in Ukraine.*

[Brel] I can name dozens of areas where we can develop cooperation, including both economic and cultural spheres.

[Hrabovska] In your opinion, what are the priorities regarding our cooperation?

[Brel] First, I would like to note that it is necessary for us to get to know each other better, because we have undergone many changes in recent years.

My country is primarily interested in supplies of agricultural equipment, fertilizers, and grain, as well as in repair of equipment. Work on joint scientific projects, which has now been halted, is of no small importance, either. We can actively cooperate in the medical field.

Cuba is currently facing great difficulties in sugar production, because we have no fertilizers, and suffer from a lack of processing equipment. On the other hand, your country has plants that specialize in processing raw Cuban sugar. Cuba's small sugar production is fully exported to purchase oil from other countries. It would be great if Ukraine had oil and we could cooperate in this sphere.

[Hrabovska] What can you say about the general situation in Cuba?

[Brel] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, when, within a day, we lost our partners cooperating in 85 percent of our national economy, the situation was abruptly aggravated.

We have been left alone to deal with the total U.S. blockade and our problems.

Socialism in Cuba developed not against the people's will, but due to their choice and efforts. We were struggling for our independence for over 150 years. The people understand what the revolution has granted them.

Despite the fact that our situation remains as difficult as before, we have managed to preserve the revolution's main achievements, which are sacrosanct for the Cubans: our independence, the right to labor, free medical care and education. We have no homeless old people on the streets; our schools and hospitals are not closed; every family receives its guaranteed quantity of products. There are neither extremely rich nor extremely poor people in Cuba.

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Today our country is in transition to a mixed economy, that is, we attract foreign capital on a level with state investments. Appropriate amendments and changes have been introduced to the Constitution, as well as other laws guaranteeing the security and reliability of investments. Free circulation of hard currencies has been authorized, too. In addition, we have decentralized the foreign trade sector, therefore many enterprises are authorized to conduct export and import activities. Such authorization has been granted to 180 enterprises, cooperating with 36 countries all over the world. We see our chance in tourism. Within a short time, our state budget deficit has been decreased by a factor of seven.

In short, we are rebuilding the national economy, without throwing the country into chaos, and gradually abandoning stereotyped patterns that we copied at one time.

Our political life is also absorbed in seeking new positive aspects to preserve and develop our socialist foundation. For instance, Cuba has become a member of the Caribbean Association, and has established diplomatic relations with over 130 countries. We enjoy the world's recognition, and the Cubans are proud of this.

[Hrabovska] Cuba faces so many problems, but, as previously, it helps Ukrainian children from the "Chernobyl zone"...

[Brel] The word internationalism is as important to us as the Fatherland. How could Cuba stand aside when the Chernobyl tragedy occurred in Ukraine? We could not, and this was quite natural for us. We helped when there were earthquakes in Armenia, Peru, Mexico. Just ask any Cuban and I am sure he will tell you that he would prefer rescuing the life of a child than having a little more bread for himself. This is not advertising, this is the essence of our people.

[Hrabovska] What human qualities do you value most?

[Brel] Primarily, respect and honesty, both in attitudes and deeds. I hate hypocrisy.

Deputy Premier's Israeli Visit Increases Ties

LD1705165995 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 0715 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Summary] The aim of the visit to Jerusalem by Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Serhiy Osyka was to set up new mechanisms in economic cooperation between Ukraine and Israel, UNIAR reports.

According to official statistics, trade turnover between Ukraine and Israel in 1992-1993 increased by almost 600 percent. Serhiy Osyka stressed this fact at meetings with businessmen at Israel's Federation of Chambers of Commerce. He said political processes in Ukraine demanded the setting up of new mechanisms in business and economic relations with other states.

During Serhiy Osyka's trip to Israel, understanding was reached on setting up new mechanisms for economic cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the field of trade and investment processes. The setting up of a Ukrainian-Israeli chamber of commerce is the first serious step in this direction, UNIAR says.

UK's Clarke Pledges Aid in Repaying External Debt

LD1705184595 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1530 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no dateline as received] — The British Government is willing to support Ukraine in every way and British Government officials at a G-7 leadership meeting, where discussion will also focus on Ukraine, will emphasize the importance of aid to that country, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke told Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz today. He added that the British Government would be able to assist Ukraine in repaying its external debt.

Oleksandr Moroz pointed out that Ukraine set great store by the attitude of Great Britain, "its opinion listened to in Europe."

Interviewed by journalists on completion of the meeting, Oleksandr Moroz said that the Ukrainian side pledged compliance with the targets set out in the 1995 state budget law, with the size of its deficit to remain inviolable even if expenditure and revenue were to change.

Kuchma To Visit Brussels To Explain NATO Position

LD1705191695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1629 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Leonid Kuchma is shortly going to Brussels to meet top figures in the European Union, NATO and the Western European Union.

According to First Deputy Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk, Kuchma's purpose is "to explain to the leadership of the European structures Ukraine's position on the architecture of European security."

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Tarasyuk said Kiev's line on plans to expand NATO "is undergoing evolution depending on those processes which are the results of discussions within the framework of NATO itself and in countries which apply for (NATO) membership."

But "NATO should not bar itself from any state in the process of its expansion," he added.

Commenting on a recent visit to Kiev by U.S. President Bill Clinton, the deputy minister said it should give "no reasons for any alarm in the neighboring states, including Russia."

"I would like to emphasize that the United States president and secretary of state expressed their positive assessment of Ukraine's efforts to build normal, good relations with Russia," Tarasyuk said.

Transport Protocol Signed With Yugoslavia

WS1805073595 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0708 GMT 18 May 95

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukraine's Transport Minister A. N. Artemenko and Yugoslavia's Transport and Communications Minister Zoran Vujovic have concluded their talks in Novi Sad by signing a Ukrainian-Yugoslav protocol on cooperation on transportation. The protocol provides Yugoslav airlines with a temporary permission to fly to Ukraine.

A long-term agreement is expected to be signed after 60 days.

Lithuanian Deputy on Visas, Trade Agreement

LD1705214095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 17 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Kazis Bobialis, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Lithuanian parliament, told Aleksandr Tkachenko, first deputy chairman of the Ukrainian parliament, that the two countries have to repeal visas for their citizens visiting the other country.

He also said that the Sejmas ratified the Ukrainian-Lithuanian Free Trade Agreement and expressed the hope that the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet will reciprocate by doing same shortly.

Tkachenko said that this agreement will be ratified by the Ukrainian parliament as early as in May.

He also expressed the hope that Lithuania will support Ukraine's application for admission to the Council of Europe.

Tkachenko added that the equity capital of the 213 Ukrainian-Lithuanian joint ventures totals $7 million and said that it would be better if there were seven JVs with a total capital of $200 million.

The turnover of Ukraine's trade with Lithuania was $277.6 million with a positive balance of $21.8 million.

National Affairs

Kuchma on Lack of Cooperation With Supreme Council

LD1705211795 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1550 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Poltava Region — "There is no cooperation between the executive branch of power and the parliament, and I fear that there will be none either," Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma told a conference with the management of oil refineries in Kremenchug on 17 May. With talks to attract foreign investments in the reconstruction of the oil refining industry in progress, Ukraine needs a normal political climate, he said.

Kuchma pledged a swift settlement to the problem of excise duty application.

Commenting on the inception of Ukrtatnafta, a financial and industrial group, Leonid Kuchma urged setting up joint ventures with Tyumen businesses.

Youths' Political Preferences, Attitudes Surveyed

WS1805082895 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 12 May 95 p 1

[Report by Liliana Vezhbovska: "Young People in Political Dimension"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **As little as 0.8 percent of young people are interested in politics on a permanent basis, 55 percent are only irritated by it, and 19 percent have no interest at all. This was the topic of the "Young Ukrainians in Political Dimension" scientific-practical conference. It was organized by Rukh's "Young Rukh" youth organization and the Ukrainian Student Union. The work of the conference was based on the results of two sociological polls conducted by the Ukrainian Academy of Psychological Sciences Center of Political Psychology, at the request of the "Young Rukh," and the Ukrainian National Democratic Institute (NDI) of Young People's Problems.**

Taking into account political actions in which young people participate, the following question arises: Is the youth movement an independent process, or is it simply a part of some political force? In the opinion

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of Oleksandr Korniyevskyy, candidate of sciences and chief of the NDI laboratory, society develops with certain regularities defined according to social and economic categories rather than age. As the results of the polls show, young people's independence is relative. Youth organizations primarily support certain political parties, and the eventual goal of all of them is political influence. Yet, they currently have few members. Eighty five percent of young people do not know anything at all about Ukrainian youth organizations.

They do not know more about political parties. For example, they declared the most positive attitude toward the Party of Greens (23 percent) (as for other parties, this indicator does not exceed 17 percent). Still, few respondents are familiar with activists of this party. Its popularity is determined not by activities, but by the characteristic name which is easily remembered. On the other hand, Rukh Chairman Vyacheslav Chornovil is the most popular political activist in all regions of Ukraine. Ninety eight percent of those polled know about him, that is more than about President Leonid Kuchma. As the polls revealed, young people are most indifferent to the Communist Party of Ukraine [KPU]. As few as every fourth college or higher grade student knows about KPU.

As Ivan Danylyuk, chief of the Center of Political Psychology laboratory, noted, engineering and technical employees and officials with higher education generally adhere to state-building and reformist positions, while young workers and people without higher education support restoration of the old regime.

The following pattern was revealed: People who support economic reforms back Ukrainian independence as well. Opponents to, for example, privatization, on the other hand, generally support pro-Russian moods.

Regarding attitudes toward Ukraine's independence, 75 percent of the respondents agreed with the following statement: "Although there are many obstacles on the path toward our statehood, I believe that Ukraine should be independent." Five percent did not agree with this. Fifty five percent of those polled agreed with the conclusion that "temporary economic difficulties should not erase the main issue from our consciousness — the fact that Ukraine is independent," and 21 percent disagreed with this. Twenty six percent of young people think that Ukraine cannot survive without Russia. Forty five percent of the respondents adhere to the opposite opinion. As little as 12 percent favored restoration of the USSR, and the attitude of 61 percent toward this idea is negative.

Both polls showed that the number of people displeased with the president's actions have significantly decreased. Every fourth young Ukrainian believes that Leonid Kuchma should have the right to dissolve the Supreme Council before the end of its term. Most young people approved of the idea of the president heading the government, and his decrees having force equal to that of laws.

Given the fact that opinions of the majority of people are unstable, Vadym Vasyutynskyy, chief of the Center of Political Psychology laboratory, noted that one can currently hold and win any referendum, either on the Soviet Union's restoration or independence. It is thus inexpedient to hold any referendum in the immediate future. People do not always have a clear stance on various issues. Their opinions are sometimes contradictory. For example, while advocating removal of monuments to Lenin, they support collective farms at the same time.

According to the Ukrainian Constitution, an individual has the right to be elected to office as of the age of 18. The Constitution, however, is violated by the Electoral Law, which prohibits people from being a candidate for Supreme Council deputy before the age of 25. Moreover, the law does not make it possible to become a deputy after the age of 25. An individual needs another five or seven years to gain experience. Therefore, as the participants in the conference believe, the issue of removing this age limit must be raised: An individual must have the right to be elected to parliament not at the age of 25, but at 18.

Obviously, not everyone has to deal with politics. The current apolitical attitude among young people is alarming, however. They will live in a future which is currently being formed. And if this future proves to be a failure, they will have themselves to blame.

Kuchma Meets Oil Managers, Council Heads in Poltava

WS1705115295 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma is visiting Poltava Oblast today. In the first half of the day, he is to visit the [Kremenchuk] open-type joint-stock association for the production of trucks, the Kremenchuk oil refinery, and the refinery's newly built clinic. He has scheduled a conference with refinery managers.

After returning to Poltava, Leonid Kuchma is to visit the No. 2 oil well in the Zakhidnovilshanska oil field. According to estimates, there are good prospects for industrial production of oil in this area. A conference of heads of certain oblasts' councils, chairmen of

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city councils, and managers of oil and gas processing enterprises will be held in Poltava in the second half of the day.

At the end of the president's trip, a news conference is to be held, as well as a discussion of current issues at his meeting with oblast council chairmen.

Supreme Council Passes Bill on Dismissal of Members

LD1705132095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1140 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 17 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Verkhovna Rada [Supreme Council], Ukraine's parliament, has passed in the first reading a draft law to lay down a procedure for dismissing its members.

The new law would allow a Rada member to be fired if he or she violates the Constitution or legislation, repeatedly neglects his or her duties or abuses his or her position.

Other grounds for dismissal would be repeated violations of parliamentary etiquette, immoral behavior, or failure to keep one's election campaign promises.

The authority to dismiss a member of parliament would be vested in a general meeting of his or her constituency, which could take up such a matter if there were a minimum of 10,000 signatures under a demand for sacking a Rada member.

Moroz Views National Issues, Crimea Conflict

AU1705172295 Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND in German 16 May 95 p 7

[Interview with Parliament President Oleksandr Moroz by Detlef-Diethard Pries during his "recent" visit to Brandenburg; date not given: "No 'Chechen Solution' for the Crimea?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Pries] The CIS republics seem to share a common political disease — strained relations between the presidents and the respective parliaments. Where do you, as president of the Ukrainian Parliament, see the causes?

[Moroz] Some of the causes are objective. Transition from the one-way leadership system to the separation of powers is not easy. It is known that there are tensions in countries in which this type of separation of powers has a tradition.

What we still do not have is a certain political culture. Some politicians in our country behave not like opponents but like enemies. Under these conditions, the temptation is growing within the executive, which is the real power and is considered the real power by the people, to rely on some political force or another. When the parliament, which consists of representatives of different parties, does not back the same side, tensions will arise.

Another cause of these tensions, which I see everywhere in the former Soviet Union, is the lack of an exact plan for the changes. So one tries to find someone who is held responsible for the failure.

Parliament does not have a direct influence on the situation, it does not exercise direct power, even though it can interfere in affairs concerning the cadres or finances. The results of its intentions and actions are not as visible as those of the executive. That is why the people in the environs of the president have the impression that they could change the situation promptly and radically, if they were not disturbed by the critics in parliament.

In the case of Ukraine, you will find not a single example that parliament had initiated the confrontation.

[Pries] How do you assess the power ratio in the Supreme Council?

[Moroz] I would say that one-third of the deputies are left wing, one-third rather right wing, and one-third in the center. There is a sort of unstable balance that requires a continuous search for majorities for decision. But our parliament has substantial capabilities, we have experienced deputies who are also experienced in governing, so that I hope for successful work.

[Pries] You are the chairman of the Socialist Party of Ukraine [SPU]. Is this compatible with the presidency of parliament?

[Moroz] When I was elected parliament president, I resigned from my mandate as chairman of the SPU Political Council. But this has not mitigated the tensions in the Supreme Council. That is why the 5th SPU Congress reelected me as party chairman.

[Pries] The SPU was founded following the ban of the Communist Party [CP]. But since 1993, the CP has again been officially registered. What is your relationship with that party?

[Moroz] Our party was founded a month after the CP was banned in the fall of 1991 — on the wave of protests against the illegal decision of the then Supreme Soviet Presidium. Having worked seriously on the theoretical basis of the new party and having analyzed the changes in the political situation and the structures of society, we noted that our assessment of the past and of the ways to overcome the present state of society distinguished

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us considerably from the traditional communist parties and their programmatic goals, as well as from the draft program of the present Communist Party of Ukraine [CPU]. When the CPU formed, we had already one and a half years of working experience. This explains in part why we decided to remain independent, even though we work very closely together with the communists.

One should also see that there is a certain allergy within society to the word "communist." But this is not the main reason why we have remained independent. The social conditions under which a party works in our country today have changed considerably. Our party must react more flexibly, and I think we are better in this respect than other political parties. It is no coincidence that while our "rating" in opinion polls was not very high — approximately 12 percent — we ranked first nevertheless.

[Pries] Which solution do you see for the conflict with the Crimean leadership?

[Moroz] The Crimean Parliament has called a referendum on the validity of the Crimean Constitution, which was declared ineffective by the Supreme Council of Ukraine. The implementation of this constitution would in practice have meant that the Crimea would have constituted itself as an independent state, even though some politicians probably rather seek to join Russia. In any case, the discussion of this issue is the exclusive right of the Supreme Council of Ukraine; thus, the planned referendum would have to be considered illegal. We will study all juridical aspects, but currently, three variants are conceivable: First, the Supreme Council of Ukraine declares the decision on the referendum null and void and the executive controls the implementation of this nullification. Second, the Crimean Parliament is dissolved on the basis of the Ukrainian Constitution, and, third, the Supreme Council of the Crimea declares its decision null and void.

I would like to see the latter happen because I think a parliament is important, no matter what it is like. It is an institution of democracy, and people must learn in practice to conduct the political struggle in this civilized form. I am confident that we will be successful and that there will be no confrontation as in other regions of the former Soviet Union.

[Pries] Do you rule out a "Chechen solution"?

[Moroz] Only a few people in Europe have analyzed the real reasons of the Chechen events. These events did not develop overnight. The disaster began when certain politicians in the struggle for power stopped at nothing: Dudayev dissolved parliament by force, and power was distributed according to clan affiliation, family relations, religion, etc. I am not talking about crime there and elsewhere... Sooner or later, the explosion would have come. In this situation, the Russian acted as a sort of fuse. But they not only touched off the explosion, they also became the party waging war, and, as a result, they caused the Chechen population to join forces against them.

What is happening there can, of course, leave no one indifferent, but one thing surprises me: Not a single country calling itself democratic said a word when the Russian Parliament was attacked. In the former Ukrainian Parliament, we did not get a relevant statement accepted. This means that double standards were applied: If we consider it useful that the parliament building there is bombed and we are not affected, then it is democratic. But if such events create concerns in our own house, it is undemocratic — as is now the case with Chechnya. Such a way of thinking is dangerous. History will yet have to be analyzed, but in any case, the disaster in Chechnya is a serious defeat of policymakers.

Doroshenko on Moroz's Opposition To President

LD1805103795 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0905 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — If the session of the Supreme Council of Ukraine adopts a compromise version of the Law on Power on 18 May it will confirm constant assurances of Oleksandr Moroz, the head of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, of his aspiration to cooperate with the president and the executive power, Mykhaylo Doroshenko, the head of the press service of the administration of the president of Ukraine, said in an interview with journalists.

According to Doroshenko, the president of Ukraine described Oleksandr Moroz's address at the session on 16 May as a "political action," which demonstrates "real attitude to the economic reform and reorganization of state power."

According to Doroshenko, there is every reason to believe that "Oleksandr Moroz has made public, in effect, his opposition to the president and his policy."

Mykhaylo Doroshenko agreed with Oleksandr Moroz regarding the negative consequences of the absence of a determined position on the government. However, according to him, the responsibility for that lies with the Supreme Council of Ukraine, because it appointed the last government 10 days before the new president was elected, and has recently made it resign in a situation where the issue of the legal basis for forming a new government has not been determined yet.

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Pro-Ukraine Majority in Crimean Parliament Likely

MK1705131095 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Pilat under the "Crimea" rubric: "The Fate of the All-Crimean Referendum Remains Unclear. The Parliamentary Majority Could Turn Into Minority"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the interfactional meeting of the Crimean Supreme Council, all of the speakers talked about the inexpediency of holding a referendum to confirm the Crimean Constitution. Deputies suggested different solutions to this problem — from the dismissal of Supreme Council Chairman Sergey Tsekov to the parliament's self-dissolution.

Meanwhile, it has become known that Igor Ivanchenko, vice premier of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea government, told journalists that the all-Crimean referendum would require 3.2 billion karbovanets, which are not available in the Crimean budget.

Deputies depicted the Crimean situation as disastrous. Deputy Oleksandr Korotko said: "In my opinion, there is a 70 percent probability of a military conflict in Crimea." True, nobody said who is going to fight whom.

The interfactional meeting adopted an appeal "To the Crimean People." It says that the deputies who signed it believe that they can "perform their duties solely in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine, and other legislative acts of Ukraine and Crimea." It is stated that "some deputies — mainly those elected from the 'Russia' bloc, who have received their mandates from people for populist slogans underpinned by nothing — directed their efforts to satisfying their political ambitions." It is emphasized in the appeal that not a single economic law has been adopted by the Crimean Supreme Council over the year of its work. "The majority of adopted legislative acts contradict not only the Ukrainian laws, but common sense, too." There is a threat that "confrontation in the parliament can be transferred to the interstate level within the CIS."

Deputies expressed their intention to work in strict conformity with international legal norms and the acting laws and to create a stable and quiet political situation in Crimea. The appeal ends with the words: "We urge that all Crimean people, all sound political forces unite for the sake of building an economically stable Crimea and of restoring the republic's statehood on a legal basis."

The decision was made to propose, at the second session of the Crimean Supreme Council on 17 May, that parliament chairman Tsekov and the entire Presidium resign voluntarily. If this proposal is rejected, it is planned to raise the question of no-confidence in the Presidium and to demand its dismissal in full. There are also other options — to initiate a request for the self-dissolution of the Crimean Supreme Council and to appeal to a part of the deputy corps in the Ukrainian Supreme Council to cancel the Crimean Supreme Council's powers.

It has become known that Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz asked Crimean Supreme Council Chairman Sergey Tsekov to come for a meeting with him on 15 May at 1000. The latter, however, refused to go to this meeting for reasons unknown to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent. Nevertheless, at the sitting of the Ukrainian Supreme Council's Presidium on 15 May, it was proposed that the Ukrainian parliament consider the question "On the Political and Legal Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea." It can be expected that the Crimean Supreme Council's decree on holding on 25 June an all-Crimean referendum to confirm the Crimean Constitution of 6 May 1991 will be annulled by the Ukrainian Supreme Council. The Ukrainian parliament can also use some tougher actions — even dissolution of the Crimean Supreme Council. If, however, the Ukrainian Supreme Council's decision on the illegitimacy of the Crimean Supreme Council's 11 deputies elected from Sevastopol — since this city does not belong to Crimea, having been brought under general Ukrainian jurisdiction — out of the remaining 87 deputies (the total number is 98), a parliamentary majority can be formed (44 deputies) which would be ready to work in the Ukrainian legal domain. Then today's majority will turn into an opposition — the more so that these 44 deputies (possibly, their number is even greater) could be joined by deputies from the "Republic" faction (9 people). Some 34 deputies, representing the "Russia" and "Russia-Unity" factions, will remain in opposition.

Crimean Tatar Rally Opts for 'Self-Defense Detachments'

AU1705163195 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 13 May 95 p 3

[Report by Oleksandr Pilat from Simferopol: "Self-Defense Detachments Will Fight the Mafia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 11 May, about 3,000 Crimean Tatars aged between 20 and 40 gathered near the Procurator's Office of the Crimean Autonomous Republic to hold a rally organized by regional majlises [assemblies] of the Simferopol Rayon and by the Organization of the Crimean Tatar National Movement. They demanded that the autonomy's law enforcement agencies put an end to the revelry of banditry on the peninsula.

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Back at the beginning of April, Ali Aliyev, a Crimean Tatar, was brutally murdered in the village of Luhove at a private construction site. At the beginning of May, at a different private construction site in the village of Strohanovka, Crimean Tatar Useni Odma was severely beaten up. A police sergeant took part in the beating. The law enforcement agencies did not take any measures, so the Tatars decided to take the initiative of combating the mafia into their own hands. Twenty-three Crimean Tatars arrived at a market place near the Simferopol Moskovskaya Square, where their fellow citizens engaged in trade, and tried to counter the racketeers. After the fight, the Crimean Tatars were arrested. For a whole day, they were detained at the police station and beaten up.

The next day, the Crimean Tatars held a meeting near the Kebir-Dzhami Mosque and decided not to rely upon law enforcement agencies any longer.

For more than an hour on 11 May, representatives of the 3,000-strong rally held negotiations with Procurator Valentin Kuptsov. According to Lerver Kerimov, chairman of the Organizing Committee of the "Adalet" (Justice) Party, and Lyutfi Osmanov, member of the presidium of the Crimean Tatar Majlis, the procurator promised to give them a final reply on the necessary measures to be taken. Major General Vitaliy Kyrychenko, chief of the Main Administration of Ukraine's Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Crimea, said that several police officers guilty of mistreating Crimean Tatars had been dismissed from their jobs. The rally decided to create self-defense detachments — detachments of askers [fighters] — in places densely populated by Crimean Tatars.

Crimea Welcomes Russian Duma Observers

LD1705204895 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Simferopol [no dateline as received] — At the morning sitting of a session of the Crimean Supreme Council on 17 May the deputies did not after all include in the agenda the issues of non-confidence and resignation of the Crimean Supreme Council Presidium with Serhiy Tsekov at its head, the self-dissolution of the Crimean Supreme Council, as well as the inclusion in the Crimea-wide referendum of the question about confidence in the institute of presidency in Crimea. Out of 82 deputies, 38 voted for the inclusion in the agenda of the issue of resignation of the Presidium.

The Crimean deputies approved an address to the president and people of Belarus, in which they congratulated them on the holding of the referendum, and also approved an address to regional councils of people's deputies of Ukraine, which proposes they support the initiative of the Crimean Supreme Council on the holding of a Ukraine-wide referendum regarding the creation of an economic and political union of the three Slav states: Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. The parliament adopted a resolution on the order of the implementation of decisions of the Crimea-wide referendum of 25 June 1995. The resolution in particular notes that "in the event of positive results the Crimean Constitution of 6 May 1992, annulled by the parliament of Ukraine, should be deemed effective on the territory of Crimea." This resolution also notes that with the purpose of implementing clause 9 of the Crimean Constitution (Crimea forms its relations with Ukraine on the basis of a treaty) a commission should be set up for drawing a treaty on division of authorities between the bodies of state power of Ukraine and Crimea, and in the event of negative results the Crimean Supreme Council should create a Crimea constitution so that it will be confirmed by the Ukrainian Supreme Council on the basis of the law "On the Autonomous Republic of Crimea."

The Crimea deputies applauded the resolution of the Russian State Duma regarding the sending to Crimea of official observers at the referendum and the appeal in that connection to the president and the Ukrainian Supreme Council to provide conditions for Crimean residents to express their will. Serhiy Tsekov told journalist in connection with the decision of the State Duma: "This is a step toward stabilization. This is a calm balanced decision. Let us at long last hold a referendum and find out the point of view of people."

The next plenary sitting of the Supreme Council of the autonomous republic will be held in a week because today and tomorrow there will be official events dedicated to the 51st anniversary of the deportation [of Crimean Tatars] from Crimea. In particular, today at 1600 hours a meeting between the government and the public on the occasion of this sad anniversary will be in the building of the Ukrainian Music Theatre.

Chernobyl Closure Costed at $4 Billion

LD1705200095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1731 GMT 17 May 95

[By Vladimir Medyanyy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 17 (Itar-Tass) - Closing down the Chernobyl nuclear station in accordance with a Ukrainian schedule will require $4 billion, according to the republic's minister for environment protection and nuclear safety Yuri Kostenko, who headed Ukraine's delegation at recent talks with experts from the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations.

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The schedule which provides for the station's stoppage in the year 2000 was in the focus of the meeting which ended here on Wednesday [17 May].

The G7 delegation, headed by Canadian ambassador in Ukraine Francois Mathys, also included officials from the International and European Banks for Reconstruction and Development.

Ukraine's plan envisages closing the second reactor in 1996, the first reactor in 1997, and the third reactor in 1999.

However, this could be accomplished only with sufficient financial support of the West, Kostenko said. According to him, several more problems to be solved included compensating for Ukraine's losses in electricity supplies (the station, with its two operating reactors, accounts for five per cent of Ukraine's electricity), building up nuclear waste storage facilities and a new shelter at the station, as well as taking care of the station's employees and residents of the adjacent town of Slavutich.

Mathys said the G7 was to discuss both technical and political aspects of Ukraine's plan at its Halifax summit in June. "The objective is to achieve before the end of this year a common understanding of the steps to be taken and financial implications to be derived from these steps," he said.

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Belarus

Referendum Results Indicate Support for Lukashenka

MM1705133295 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 May 95 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Kovalev: "Nationalism Alien to Belarus. Republic Referendum Results Provide Convincing Evidence of That"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk — When asked "Do you agree to the Russian language being given equal status to Belarusian?" 83.1 percent of citizens who took part in the plebiscite replied in the affirmative. Some 75 percent of respondents advocated the establishment of a new state flag and coat of arms and 82.4 approved the Belarusian president's actions aimed at economic integration with Russia. Lastly, 77.6 percent of referendum respondents agreed that it is necessary to give the head of state the right to dissolve parliament in the event of its systematically or flagrantly violating the republic's constitution.

Admittedly, the cited data have not yet been officially confirmed by the Central Electoral Commission [CEC]. That will happen in a day or two. But, according to Alyaksandr Abramovich, chairman of the CEC, there will be no significant changes in the results of the nationwide ballot. It may only be a question of tenths of a percent.

Thus, most of the 64.5 percent of voters who took part in the referendum answered all four questions suggested by Alyaksandr Lukashenka in the affirmative. And thus gave an unequivocal indication that despite all the current difficulties the people of Belarus back their young president and the course he is pursuing. Belarusian national radicals in the shape of the Belarusian People's Front [BPF] and its supporters can now hang out the black flags. They wasted a load of effort to thwart the referendum. And when that failed they mounted a sensational propaganda campaign in an attempt to persuade their fellow citizens that Lukashenka is the "enemy of the nation" and wants to deprive the people of their native language and once again incorporate Belarus in the Russian empire. But these attempts also proved to be in vain. Most of the republic's citizens remain resistant to the virus of nationalism and Russophobia. As was confirmed on Sunday 14 May.

A second round of elections to the Supreme Soviet now await voters, due to take place 28 May. Those candidates who got through the first round include plenty of well-known Belarusian politicians. Stanislaw Shushkevich, Vyacheslaw Kebich, Mechyslaw Hryb, BPF leader Zyanon Paznyak, National Bank Chairman Stanislaw Bahdankevich, and former vice premier Viktar Hanchar are in particular continuing to campaign for seats as deputies. Most of the parliamentary candidates are independent. Then come representatives of two left- wing parties — the Agrarian Party and the Communist Party — followed by candidates from the BPF and other parties. I must point out that during the first round the national radicals lost over 80 percent of their nominees.

Reports of Russian Customs Officers Denied

WS1805092495 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0700 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the recent statements by President Lukashenka on the planned participation of 100 Russian Customs Committee specialists in organizing customs controls along the Belarusian-Ukrainian border, Belarusian Foreign Minister Syanko declared: Our position on this issue is sufficiently clear and is that customs and border services of other states cannot operate on Belarusian territory. The report about the 100 Russian customs officers is not accurate. Meanwhile, as Viktar Razhulaw, deputy chief of the Belarusian Customs Committee, told an RID correspondent, about 75 Russian customs officers have already arrived at major Belarusian customs points. He also emphasized that the stay of the Russian customs officers in Belarus is temporary, but did not provide any specific timeframe.

Tripartite Customs Union Agreement

954F2242A Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 May 95 p 12

[Customs Union Agreement and articles from agreement between Russia and Belarus]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Russian Federation on the one hand and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the other, hereinafter called the "Contracting Parties,"

aspiring to further develop balanced and mutually profitable economic relations,
expressing the intention to continue realization of the Treaty on the Creation of an Economic Union of 24 September 1993, and
wishing to embark on the formation of a Customs Union among them,
have agreed as hereunder:

Article 1.

The Contracting Parties shall form a united Customs Union, the purposes and principles of formation, the mechanism and stages of creation, and the procedure

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of the operation of which and also the determination of customs duty, taxes, and fees and charges and the conditions of the imposition of temporary restrictions and customs control shall be determined by the Customs Union Agreement Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus of 6 January 1995.

Article 2.

The Contracting Parties shall assume in full the rights and obligations ensuing from the Customs Union Agreement Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus of 6 January 1995 in respect to the purposes, principles, and operation of the mechanism and stages of the creation of the Customs Union, distribution of duty, taxes, and fees and charges, and the conditions of the imposition of temporary restrictions and customs control. The foreign economic activity of the Republic of Kazakhstan here shall be regulated in accordance with the Agreement Between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on a Common Procedure of the Regulation of Foreign Economic Activity of 20 January 1995.

Article 3.

For realization of this agreement, the Contracting Parties shall on the basis of a separate agreement create an executive body of the Customs Union.

The Contracting Parties shall prior to the creation of the executive body of the Customs Union be guided by the provisions of the Agreement Between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Belarus of 6 January 1995.

Article 4.

The Contracting Parties have agreed that inalienable parts of this agreement are the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on a Common Procedure of the Regulation of Foreign Economic Activity of 20 January 1995 and the Protocol on the Introduction of Free- Trade Procedures Without Exceptions and Restrictions Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan of 20 January 1995.

Article 5.

This agreement shall not affect the right of either Contracting Party to adopt in accordance with international law and its internal legislation measures necessary for the protection of state security, public order, the health or morals of society, the cultural and historical heritage of its peoples, and the protection of rare animals and plants.

Article 6.

Disputes and disagreements between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation and/or application of provision of this agreement shall be settled by way of negotiations.

Article 7.

This agreement shall not affect other international treaties of the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Kazakhstan which do not conflict with this agreement.

Article 8.

Each Contracting Party may terminate its participation in the agreement by forwarding official notification in writing to the other Contracting Party concerning its intention to withdraw from the agreement 12 months prior to the withdrawal.

Article 9.

This agreement shall apply temporarily as of the date it is signed and take effect as of the date of the final notification of fulfillment in the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Kazakhstan of the intra-state procedures necessary for it to take effect.

Done in Moscow in one true copy in Russian. The true copy shall be kept in the Government of the Russian Federation Archives, which shall forward to each state that signed this agreement its certified copy.

From the Customs Union Agreement Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus

Article 1. Purposes and principles of the operation of the Customs Union.

The Contracting Parties define the Customs Union as an economic association of the states based on the following principles:

a) the existence of a common customs territory of the subscribers to the Customs Union. The common customs territory shall be formed by way of:

the cancellation in trade between states of the Contracting Parties in commodities originating on their territories of customs duty, taxes, and fees and charges of equivalent effect and also quantitative restrictions;
the establishment and application in relations with third parties of an identical trade posture, common customs tariffs, and measures of the nontariff regulation of foreign trade;
the formation of a mechanism of mutual relations of the Customs Union and third states and international organizations based on the provision of the Agreement Between the Government of the Russian Federation

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and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on a Common Procedure of the Regulation of Foreign Economic Activity of 12 April 1994;

b) the presence of a uniform mechanism of regulation of the economy based on market principles of management and standardized legislation.

Article 2. Mechanism and stages of the creation of the Customs Union.

Stage one. Practical application of the mechanism of operation of the Agreement on the Creation of a Free Trade Zone of 15 April 1994 and, primarily, the cancellation of tariff and quantitative restrictions in reciprocal trade.

The restrictions in reciprocal trade will be canceled here on the basis of the creation of completely identical systems of the regulation of foreign economic relations (including tariff and nontariff regulation) and also the establishment of an identical trade posture, common customs tariffs, and measures of nontariff regulation in respect to third countries.

Standardization within four months of the date that this agreement is signed of foreign trade, customs, currency-financial, tax, and other legislation affecting foreign trade activity and pertaining, in particular, to:

the economic conditions of management based on market principles ensuring equal opportunities and guarantees for subjects of economic activity of the states of the Contracting Parties;
price policy;
currency regulation and currency control;
export control;
unfair competition and restrictive business practice;
intellectual property.

The Contracting Parties shall organize work on the standardization of national legislation regulating economic activity. The Contracting Parties shall organize supervision of the practice of application of the law and assurance of the uniformity of the implementation of methods of:

the establishment of dependable mechanisms of supervision of the prevention of unsanctioned re-exports of commodities to third countries;
payment and settlement in trade and nontrade transactions on a bilateral and multilateral basis;
the application of the unified regulation of foreign economic relations in respect to third countries;
the convergence of economic conditions of management;
the introduction of foreign trade customs statistics;
the exercise of dependable customs control at the external customs borders of the states of the Contracting Parties.

Stage two. Unification, following the fulfillment of all the measures specified by stage one, of the customs territories of the states of the Contracting Parties in a common customs territory and solution of the question of the international legal personality of the Customs Union and the fate of current international treaties.

The Contracting Parties shall apply the Fundamentals of Customs Legislation of the States of the Commonwealth of Independent States approved by the Council of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth on 10 December 1994.

Article 5 [numbering as published]. Conditions of the Imposition of Temporary Restrictions.

Temporary restrictions in foreign trade by way of the use of tariff, quantitative, or other equivalent measures may be applied only in instances of:

an acute shortage of a given commodity on the domestic market— until the situation on the market has stabilized;
an acute balance of payments deficit—until the balance of payments situation has stabilized;
if some commodity is imported onto the territory of one Contracting Party in such increased quantities or on such terms as harm or threaten to harm the domestic manufacturers of such or directly competitive commodities.

Prior to the adoption of any restrictive measures, the Contracting Parties must in the instances after a need for their application has arisen make available to one another the corresponding information for consultation.

Article 6. Customs control.

The Contracting Parties shall ensure the unity of administration of their customs services on the basis of the corresponding agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Belarus:

they shall organize joint control of the movement of goods and means of transport;
they shall abolish customs control on the common border with the unconditional assurance of dependable customs control on their external borders.

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Moldova

Lebed Suggests Peacekeepers' Status for 14th Army

LD1705142795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1223 GMT 17 May 95

[By Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Commander of the Russian 14th army Lieut. Gen. Aleksandr Lebed on Wednesday [17 May] suggested granting a status of peacekeepers to his troops, stationed in Moldova's breakaway Dniester region.

The general told Tass that "this would help preserve peace in the region and save money of Russian taxpayers".

Lebed reiterated his statement, voiced at a news conference of May 12, that a threat of a new war still exists in Moldova.

Speaking about his disagreements with Russia's top military command, Lebed said that although he "has no will to serve in (Russian Defence Minister) Pavel Grachev's army, and is ready to quit, nobody can relieve (him) from a burden of responsibility for the fate of thousands people in the Dniester region".

The general stressed that he does not pursue any political aims, but is not going to be "a puppet on strings in the hands of politicians".

14th Army Reform Seen Rekindling Dniester Conflict

MK1805114095 Moscow OBSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian No. 20/96 18-24 May 95 (Signed to press 17 May) p 1

[Report from Tiraspol by Rodion Morozov: "Dniester Region: A Crime Is in the Making"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An air defense brigade of the Dniester Region Moldovan Republic [DRMR] has retargeted its antiaircraft guns onto an ammunition depot in the village of Kolbasnoye, which is protected by the 14th Army. The depot's capacity is more than three times that of the Pacific Fleet arsenals that exploded not so long ago. Just a single occasional gunshot will be enough to create a multi-kilometer vortex in place of the Kolbasnoye depot.

A wild thought springs to mind — what if this is precisely what strategists from the Russian Defense Ministry have planned? These hundreds of thousands of munitions on DRMR territory give it nothing but a headache. There are 2,600 train cars of them in Kolbasnoye alone. Storage facilities are so cramped for space that 1,200 carloads of shells and bombs simply sit on the ground. Some 657 tonnes of munitions cannot be transported at all because they have passed all permissible deadlines while stored there — the mines are dated 1938. In addition, Pavel Grachev is anxious to get rid of 14th Army Commander Aleksandr Lebed. For the latter, however, the depots are his trump card. The reason is that everybody is perfectly aware of the fact that once Lebed is removed from the Dniester Region, the munitions will be pillaged right away — tens of thousands of firearms, hundreds of armored vehicles, and other military property of the ex-USSR.

Indeed, no sooner had speculation mounted yet again about Gen. Lebed's removal, which has become more than a realistic prospect following Grachev's directive on dissolving the army command, then fighters of the UNA-UNSO self-defense group, and emissaries from Chechnya, Abkhazia, Crimea, and Moldova showed up in Tiraspol. Even a representative of a Lithuanian firm specializing in arms trade ventured to apply for a reception by the army commander. Everyone is trying to grab his share of the cake. Moldova lays claim to 35 percent of the army property. The Dniester Region, to everything. And although the 14th Army is still protecting the arsenals, the Dniester Region Armed Forces have already set up their own posts. The largest arsenals in Kolbasnoye have been cordoned off by a reinforced battalion of the Dniester Region guard. Ukrainian border troops, whose post is just 1,800 meters from Kolbasnoye, have been put on full alert. A battalion of the Moldovan Special Purpose Police Detachment is also in full readiness. All this is painfully reminiscent of Karabakh, the Transcaucasus, Chechnya. There, it started in a similar fashion — by dividing army depots. And afterward wars flared up.

Lebed has managed to keep looters away.

The first blood has already been shed. Nikolay Dorozhkin, a well known criminal authority nicknamed Kiyevskiy, with his two cronies was shot dead by an automatic rifle with a silencer in downtown Tiraspol the other day. Kiyevskiy controlled all arms deliveries from the DRMR (primarily of weapons stolen from 14th Army depots even before Lebed became commander) to Russia, Crimea, Abkhazia, Chechnya. He urgently arrived in the Dniester Region from Odessa as soon as he learned that the much-desired arsenals may be up for grabs one of these days. During the last week before his death he conducted the most energetic talks with his potential customers about large-scale deliveries of arms and hardware from the Dniester Region military depots. There was no shortage of customers. But Kiyevskiy encountered fierce competition...

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After his killing, about 60 thugs arrived from Odessa. To avenge their boss' murder. But most importantly, not to let the weapons slip out of control.

Aleksandr Lebed's statement that talk about his resignation is just rumors has somewhat stabilized the situation. Still, ferment in the army itself continues. Officers and soldiers (mostly contractees) say that whatever decision on the fate of the 14th Army might be made in Moscow, they will not leave the DRMR, nor will they give up their weapons to anybody. There is also talk about self-defense units being set up. Both in case of war with Moldova — which is seen as inevitable should the army be withdrawn — and to fight with "internal enemies." Tensions in relations between the DRMR State Security Ministry and 14th Army servicemen have been ratcheted up to the utmost.

Aleksandr Lebed said in a conversation with your OBSHCHAYA GAZETA correspondent that if the 14th Army command is finally dissolved in July according to the defense minister's directive, he "will have nothing else to do in Tiraspol." He is "not going to burden Pavel Grachev's army with his presence" and will submit a request for separation. Because he is not going to bear responsibility — even morally — for the inevitable consequences of actions by Defense Ministry reformers. The army commander thinks that an armed conflict and subsequently "a war of all against all" will be guaranteed.

Do you and I really need to see the Dniester Region flare up yet another time and the fiery Balkan-Caucasus arc to close there?

Who needs it then?

'Constructive Dialogue' Wanted With Russia on 14th Army

LD1705163695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1330 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, May 17 (Interfax) - The Moldovan parliament has not made a final decision about sending its representatives to the debate at the Russian State Duma on the situation in the 14th Russian Army stationed in the Transdniester region. This was disclosed to Interfax by the Chairman of the Foreign Policy Parliamentary Committee Dmitriy Dyakov who received the invitation from the Duma Monday. The debate is scheduled for May 23.

"We are closely following the developments related to the 14th Army. The Moldovan parliament wants the situation to be stable without getting out of control. We are ready for a constructive dialogue on all questions but have not noticed a similar readiness in the Duma so far," Dyakov said.

At the end of the week Aleksandr Lebed is to travel to Moscow for the debate. The leaders of the Transdniester region invited by the Duma also intend to take part. The delegation plans to speak against the withdrawal of the 14th Army from the region and the dismissal of army commander General Lebed.

Joint Venture With Russian Gas Company Set Up

MM1805094295 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 17 May 95 p 2

[Statement by "Gazprom" Information and Advertising Center: "Good Basis for Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Representatives of the Russian joint- stock company "Gazprom" and the state concern "Moldovagaz" have signed an agreement to found a Moldova-Russia closed-type joint-stock company ("Gazsnabtranzit").

The agreement stipulates the creation of a joint enterprise for the operation and development of a system of transit and distribution gas mains on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

The agreement sets out the company's legal status and the aims and types of its activities, defines its managerial bodies, and describes special working conditions.

The Russian joint-stock company "Gazprom" and Moldovan enterprises are each contributing 50 percent of the authorized capital and shares.

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Kazakhstan

Premier Kazhegeldin on Reforms, Russian Ties

MM1705111195 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 16 May 95

[Interview with Prime Minister Alezhan Kazhegeldin by Yevgeniy Dotsuk in Almaty; date not given: "It Is Important To Enter Russia by the Door, Not To Climb in Through the Window" — from the "Business Tuesday" section, pp 1, 3; first paragraph is introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Former businessman Alezhan Kazhegeldin has twice resigned from the government which he joined one year ago. The first time he resigned along with the outgoing old Cabinet of Ministers, the second following the disappearance of the Kazakhstani parliament. Twice he has been restored to the premiership by edict of Nazarbayev. By education he is an economist; he knows four languages; he is 43 years old, married with two children, and has long since had no material problems.

[Dotsuk] I want to recall certain phrases of yours, which are almost aphorisms, connected with Russian-Kazakhstani relations. Earlier you said: "If Russia closes its doors to us, we will climb in through the window"; but now, having returned from the United States, you expressed yourself fairly coldly with regard to the policy of a Russia which, in your words, "has today narrowed to within the confines of the Sadovoye Beltway." [i.e. concerns itself only with the interests of downtown Moscow] Does that mean that Kazakhstan is changing its affections?

[Kazhegeldin] I was recently asked jokingly: On which of the two electric chairs will Kazakhstan now sit — the Russian or the American? I joked back: The voltage is somewhat lower on the American chair — 110 volts. But seriously: I was and I remain a convinced supporter of integration. I am sure that we cannot survive without a single economic area. Our Central Asian attempts to create something like a "mini-CIS" are being undertaken because Russia shows no interest in the "greater CIS."

The Czar obtained a large part of the area possessed by the Russian Empire by coaxing and by persuasion, rather than by force. A common area would resolve all our problems. And Russians would live peacefully in Kazakhstan, following Russian traditions, and not go off to somewhere near Kostroma, losing everything that they had before. I do not want people to leave Kazakhstan.

[Dotsuk] One or two of your wishes are already beginning to be realized. I have in mind the Russian-Kazakhstani agreements in January. In addition, in recent weeks Russia has also joined up to a number of Kazakhstani oil projects...

[Kazhegeldin] I am very glad that now that Chernomyrdin's government has begun working, the CIS' activity has livened up. In 1995 we are working with Russia far more closely in the economic sphere.

Our commodity exchange and commodity turnover have increased sharply; Russia accounts for more than 65 percent of it. This is why we are constantly trying to rid ourselves of the need to "climb in through the window."

In my view, the agreement on the Karachaganak deposit with the participation of "Gazprom" was a breakthrough. Of course, it has a political significance. But it also has a great economic expedience. Recently Alekperov, the president of the "LUKoil" company, visited our country, and we signed several agreements on developing oil deposits and a project for the construction of an internal pipeline with "LUKoil's" participation; and there is a project for the construction of a gas pipeline in North Kazakhstan in conjunction with "Gazprom." More than all the politicians, it is capital that decides. Politicians can say what they like, but capital will plow its own furrow. The other day we sent the Russian Federation Government our proposals on the creation of a joint transnational industrial-financial group.

[Dotsuk] Alezhan Magzhanovich, probably all post-Soviet prime ministers are not too fond of their parliaments. In this respect you have been lucky; the outcome of the latest political events in Kazakhstan proved to be so advantageous to the government that it is difficult to believe that everything happened of its own accord, without a political scenario. Parliament disappears, the president creates under his edict the Kazakhstani Peoples' Assembly, which at its first session proposes to extend the term of its organizer. The government finds in the rickety budget the necessary 220 million tenge for a referendum, which rounds off an almost fairy-tale situation...

[Kazhegeldin] I can honestly say that, when the Constitutional Court deemed the parliament to be illegitimate, this was a happy chance for the government to speed up economic reforms. I say a chance, because even for reasons of the greatest political or economic expediency, Nazarbayev would not have engaged in such a venture.

Of course, we have taken advantage of the situation which arose. The president's edicts, which have the force of law, are energetically shaping for us today a normal market-oriented legislative base. In April-May alone Kazakhstanis will get more than 20 new fundamental laws. One of them is the long-awaited Law "On Taxes." This is not only an economic, but also

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a political document of a strategic character. From 1 July the number of taxes in Kazakhstan will be reduced from 49 to 11, and total taxation will not exceed 50 percent. And after all, the old parliament managed to wring from itself only seven laws in a year! The idea of the Assembly had been "floating" in Kazakhstan for two years.

In the wider picture, the leading political figures in the United States know that Nazarbayev is not a man who will try to introduce dictatorship. That is the first thing; second — the level of reforms carried out in society would not allow this. Already, since the announcement of the referendum in Almaty, the U.S. defense secretary, representatives of the World Bank, U.S. Deputy Secretary for Energy White, and the "Mobil" oil company have come to Almaty, confirming all our accords.

I will let you into a secret — this is not the last referendum. There will also be a very important poll: on constitutional reform. It is necessary to resolve the problems of land ownership, bilingualism, and the state structure — questions which the president has posed before and which the ex-parliament "threw out."

If the parliament-free interlude with which fate presented us is used intelligently, and we finally acquire a normal Constitution and normal laws, I can honestly say that I will be indifferent as to whom the next elections bring into parliament.

[Dotsuk] There are no visitors in your reception room. They say that in a few months you have made the work of the functionary in government unprofitable?

[Kazhegeldin] Yes, I am realizing my dream! We have got rid of everything for which people came to the government earlier. We no longer touch credits or give out quotas and licenses. We offer enterprises complete independence — we submit them for privatization or put them under the control of foreign companies. We do not appoint presidents of companies. State farms are moving away from us. There is no one in my reception room, because today there is nothing to ask for in the Cabinet of Ministers, nothing to give bribes for, so interest in us has fallen away.

Only by granting them maximum freedom can people be given the maximum enterprise. If there is no freedom, there is no enterprise. Look at the West. Look at Moscow today. The spirit of enterprise plus the talent of Luzhkov have transformed Moscow into a capital city. And I remember the recent dirty Moscow of Gavriil Popov's day.

Nazarbayev perfectly understands who I am and what to expect from me. People always used to say to him: Nursultan Abishevich, we are for reforms, but for a Kazakhstani version. But I am convinced: There are no Kazakh [kazakhskiy] reforms, just as there are no Russian [russkiye] reforms.

What a pity that Russia's reforms are proceeding so dramatically. And after all, success of reforms in Russia also means victory for reforms throughout the post-Soviet area. Both in the economy, and in politics. As soon as Gaydar started work, the Supreme Soviet did not allow him to do anything. As soon as something is started in the Russian Government, without fail some diverting piece political flummery surfaces. The latest to be thrown up is Chechnya.

[Dotsuk] Alezhan Magzhanovich, you came into state service from private business. Tell me, has a difference emerged in the philosophy of Kazhegeldin the businessman and Kazhegeldin the prime minister? Or are you a prime minister with the psychology of a private person?

[Kazhegeldin] It is easier to tackle reforms in the post of prime minister, of course,. I once gave my word to the guys in my enterprise not to serve again in a state post. But reforms cannot be accomplished in the confines of an individual plant. Hence I betrayed my word — true, with their agreement — when I accepted the invitation to work in the seven- chamber oblast administration. That was 1992. In 1993 the president invited me into his team to work for reforms. I agreed.

As for the difference in the philosophy of Kazhegeldin the businessman and Kazhegeldin the prime minister — most likely I have combined the two.

[Dotsuk] You have firmly given everyone to understand that you will tolerate no lobbying for anyone's interests in government: At one session of the Cabinet of Ministers your opinion conflicted with that of the president on the question of holdings. A proportion of the president's power has today unequivocally been transferred into your hands. Do you expect problems of a personal kind to arise between you in this connection?

[Kazhegeldin] What happened "at one particular session" was normal interaction between two people who understand one another. I am concerned how best, and how most effectively and quickly, to carry out the president's reformist ideas. You are asking about problems of a personal kind, are you not? I am not aware of any although I do, however, know about petty and malicious semi-hints and half-nods surreptitiously made by master intriguers on the lines of: Isn't Kazhegeldin aiming for the presidency? No, he is not aiming for the presidency. I want to work alongside, together, as a team, with those to whom the whole people has entrusted its fate and its future.

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I need a certain time, a year or perhaps a little more, to do what my cabinet has planned. Yes, I have brought in an unpopular program, but I will never promise something that is impossible to fulfill.

Review of National Political Movements

LD1705203595 Almaty EKSPRESS in Russian 12 May 95 p2

[Unattributed report: "Kazakhstan's Contemporary Political Space and Kazakh National Political Movements"]

[FBIS Translated Text] (Zh. Kuanyshalin) gained victory in the elections not as one of the leaders of GDK [Civil Movement of Kazakhstan] Azat, since he had not received any appreciable financial or organizational support from them. Here, the factor of the political figure's individuality and personality played a role. The political image of (Zh. Kuanyshalin), a representative of the "new wave" of politicians, is marked by contrasts and by his diversity of political hues; it is not for nothing he is known for his snap reactions — which are generally inadequate — to events. Being a deputy to the Kazakh Supreme Council of the last convocation, he took an active part in all possible rallies, demonstrations, and meetings — often organizing them himself — made a speech at the international conference on human rights in Brussels; that is to say, he used all available ways of creating a political image.

An opinion about him was formed in parliament as a man eager to argue, an irreconcilable opponent of the parliament and of official structures.

All other political leaders suffered defeat at the elections to the Kazakh Supreme Council. The reason for this is the lack of a clearly defined social base, the absence of financial resources for a wide-ranging election campaign, disagreement between the leaders, lack of coherence, lack of coordination in political programs, and a dislike of the idea of setting up election blocs, which would undoubtedly have lent order to the lines and trends of the election struggle.

After election defeats, some of the parties and movements let up on their activities and retreated into the shadows. Only GDK Azat has an active political existence.

But in August 1994 the People's Democratic Party Zheltoksan, the Republican Party of Kazakhstan and — formally — GDK Azat, in the search for a sphere of active political work became the co-founders of Atazhurt, with (A. Kydyrbayev) elected as its main coordinator. After seven months, the Atazhurt people's front had not become an influential force, still worse it has not even got past the registration phase to date.

The Republican Party of Kazakhstan led by (S. Akatayev) did not find any active financial means or organizing levers for full political activity either. It also lacks experience in everyday current political work. Comparing the tenets of the programs and the statutory aims of GDP Azat and the Republican Party of Kazakhstan, it is noticeable that in the starting phase, their founding phase, they put forward similar aims: urgent adoption of the declaration of Kazakhstan's state sovereignty; speeding up the adoption of the new constitution; laws on ownership, citizenship and migration; the rights of republican formations of internal troops and state security organizations under the Kazakh Supreme Council; dismantling party control; depoliticizing all state institutions, law enforcement bodies, the KGB, and the army; renewal of the Republic's symbols; and so on. All these issues have of course now become an everyday reality in Kazakhstan, and that influenced the full party life of these organizations. Alongside this, there are themes in the program documents of these parties that take into account the latest political and social slogans, since society's political interests had already been crystallized by that time.

An unsatisfactory situation has developed around the National Democratic Party. The Kazakh Justice Ministry denied it registration in April 1994 because of contradictions in certain points of the program with the Kazakh Constitution and also some other laws. The leader of this party, Professor K. Ormantayev, still remains among the leading staff of GDK Azat.

At present, GDK Azat remains the most serious political force representing the radical-minded section of ethnic Kazakhs. It is assimilating the experience of current party work, undergoing a complicated path of formation and development, and preparing for the next elections to the Kazakh Supreme Council. It has the necessary organizational basis for that — sections in 15 regions of the republic. At the recent republic-wide conference of the coordinating council of GDK Azat in March, three working commissions were formed: on the movement of Turkic peoples; on land; and on the state language. They are headed respectively by Kh. Kozha-Akhmet and his deputies B. Darimbet and K. Asanov. The staff of the commissions included members of the coordinating council B. Kudaibergenov, D. Satybaldyev, B. Durmenova, A. Kadyrbayeva, M. Tatimov, T. Seitkaliuli, and others.

The contemporary political situation moves GDK Azat and the Republican Party of Kazakhstan toward seeking new forms of cooperation and mutual relations

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with analogous parties and movements, with the aim of achieving the tasks ahead and to attract people's sympathy and votes.

Kuttykadam Reviews Recent Political Trends

954F2278A Almaty KARAVAN in Russian 12 May 95 No 19, p 2

[Dialogue between political scientist Seydakhmet Kuttykadam and KARAVAN columnist Sapa Mekebayev; place and date not given: "The Political Scene: A Change in Scenery"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Recent events in the republic's political life have generated an ambiguous reaction from the public and the press—from the usual "I approve, sir!" to categorical rejection. But what awaits us tomorrow and in the near term? What changes is it possible to foresee today, and to what course is the slow state barge turning? A dialogue about this is conducted by political scientist Seydakhmet Kuttykadam and KARAVAN columnist Sapa Mekebayev.

[Kuttykadam] The path of reforms has never been strewn with roses anywhere, especially in countries with a totalitarian past, and the problems we are now experiencing are in general objective. However, it is a pity that we are having punishing problems where many before us have fallen. A struggle is going on between the old and the new not only in the political arena but also in the hearts and minds of politicians. Our future depends on which wins out.

At the present juncture the president, at first glance, is winning, but this is a tactical victory. All of us have lost strategically, including the presidential team. Unfortunately the president's advisers can calculate only one or two moves ahead. I am not finding excuses for the opposition—it has made numerous mistakes and showed its weakness, fragmentation, and inability to wage a tough political fight and take advantage of a favorable political situation.

[Mekebayev] I agree that the country is marking time in its own political development, and even a rollback is observed on some positions. Of course, the authorities are to blame for this in the first place. However, parties and movements that are somewhat apart from the authorities, or in opposition to them, have also made a "contribution." They simply turned out to be unsound opponents owing to an absence of any clear positions whatsoever. Depending on the situation, they either fraternize with the authorities, or suddenly recall "principles" and demand resignations. The party that yesterday declared its opposition to the president is today in the camp of his supporters. Leaders of parties that disagree with government policy dart in and out of the corridors of executive authority as advisers, consultants, and even ambassadors for special missions. All these innumerable dwarfish parties have long since discredited themselves in the eyes of the public. Hence the prediction: The political disorder in the camp of the alleged opposition will end with its quiet death and the creation of a new strong presidential party. But the small noisy companies of a national-patriotic and communist bent will remain as elements of the scenery on the political scene. Neither the first nor the second are frightening—it is unlikely that a majority of the population will fall under their odious banner.

[Kuttykadam] The same can also be said about various forces in the former Supreme Soviet. Neither in the first nor in the second case could the deputies do anything to oppose the initiators of the dissolution of parliament.

A very difficult and ambiguous but nonetheless advancing evolution of the political system was disrupted. We have been thrown back about five years, if, of course, the mistakes are not quickly corrected. Trust in the most important state institution— parliamentary authority—has been undermined. I am confident also that henceforth the Supreme Soviet will not have special weight in the state in the future, and that no one takes it seriously now.

[Mekebayev] I do not think that anyone took the parliament seriously before either. All those stories about cars, apartments, pay at ministerial level.... However, the Most High is its judge, and, as they say, don't speak ill of the dead....

It is another matter to ask who will replace the dissolved deputies? Here, in my opinion, the defining moment will be the sociopolitical background of the forthcoming elections. But the background is joyless: The population is tired of the endless political show and the crush and bustle in the capital corridors of authority, and only enigmatically smiles at the thought of intercessors for its interest. The leaders of various parties somehow became petty before our eyes and are muttering in a confused way about the usefulness of the consolidation and unity of interests. Thus, with almost no risk of making a mistake, it can be assumed that the elections will occur as scheduled—in a literal sense. Probably "new Kazakhstanis"—farmers and merchants—will speak from prepared papers at preelection meetings, in addition to representatives of the working class, the toiling peasantry, and also the social strata in the persons of teachers, doctors, or engineers. After this the nomenklatura guard, which is skillful in providing for itself, will in friendly column enter the "gray house" on Old Square. In the first three or four meetings it will "settle" questions about cars, apartments, and pay at ministe-

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rial level, and with a feeling of profound dissatisfaction will go out "to the people" to hear its expectations. The "white house" on "new" square will reproach the people's favorites for their immodest appetites and will be quietly happy that "at least they are not interfering in our work." In about a year parliament, evidently, will think about its own destiny and will dissolve itself before others do so for it. However, I would be happy to be mistaken in my predictions....

[Kuttykadam] It is possible to talk about how the mutual relations of the legislative and executive branches of power will develop.

It is necessary to assume that parliament will be sufficiently compact and bicameral. There should be no illusion with respect to its composition—it will be loyal. This time the executive authority will do everything for this. Especially the upper chamber, which will have to carefully look after the lower chamber. I think that about 30 percent of the independent candidates will make it to parliament nonetheless, but it is not they who will matter there. It will be extremely necessary for the president to "clean up" his circle slightly. The right place for those "cleaned out" is in the Supreme Soviet—to lobby for the ideas of the executive authorities.

After the announcement of the elections to parliament the question about future actions will come up. It seems to me that three variants are possible. First: Change nothing and let things drift. Second, establish a tough autocracy with the suppression of any offshoots of opposition and an independent press. And third: Change policy radically, get rid of the personnel ballast on the team (they are candidates to parliament) and instead of them attract strong people, and declare a consolidation of all political forces and the formation of a coalition government in which approximately one-third of the portfolios will be given to the independents and the opposition. The last variant, at first glance, seems the most improbable, but however strange it may seem, it is exactly the one that could be adopted. Of course, not in pure form, but as a fundamental idea, inasmuch as the first has already not justified itself, and the second negates world experience.

Having in this way "tied" the main political forces to itself, it could even announce forthcoming presidential elections for next year.

[Mekebayev] The events of grand policy are not only reflected in the press but also have a direct influence on this press. I do not agree with the positions of some of our mass media, but I give them their due when I see what this position is. The official press is having an open fight with the unofficial press now. The moral-ethical aspect is noteworthy in this situation: Newspapers that are protected by the power and money of the authorities are lambasting publications that maintain themselves and at times are helpless in the face of the cunning incursions or open arbitrariness of the "upper echelons." What can one say about corporate solidarity when the recent fire at the KARAVAN warehouse evoked the unconcealed gloating of some colleagues from the state publishing house. Barely was there a mood swing "above," when state newspapers were splattered, it would seem, with already forgotten headlines: "In an Atmosphere of Unanimity" and "On the Road to Prosperity." But in the final analysis there should be an elementary feeling of shame.

[Kuttykadam] Of course, there is pressure on the mass media— most often psychological—although sometimes authoritative levers are also applied. It is troubling that journalists from some publications treated this calmly, and returned rather quickly to the former condition. Now they have no headaches, as it is "explained" to them how to write, whom to lambaste and whom to praise. The roots of our democracy are not too deep.

I do not want to be a judge, I know the collectives of many editorial offices rather well, and I simply want to call on my colleagues: Be worthy of your profession. I am not calling on them to stand in opposition to the authorities—please, express their interests and support them (this is also probably necessary), but do not go too far, and guard your honor. These swerves from reckless bravery at an "authorized" time to unconcealed flunkyism in times of prohibitions undermines the health of society. The unscrupulousness of the press not only dupes the people, but also corrupts the authorities.

Verk Assails Local Press

954F2280A Almaty KARAVAN in Russian 12 May 95 No 19, p 6

[Article by Viktor Verk under the heading "Thinking Out Loud": "Were They Given Freedom, What Would They Do With It?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Having recently returned from quite a lengthy trip to the country of "victorious capitalism," the first thing I did was to set about reading Kazakhstan's newspapers. I will tell you frankly, gentlemen, that it was none too pleasant an exercise, particularly from want of habit. Forever the same university lecturers and professors, political scientists, and sundry "experts" going on and on about "the country's moderate movement along the path of reforms" or, on the other hand, bemoaning the "difficulties of transition to the market." My journalist brethren are busy either with labeling their colleagues from other publications or with unrestrained eulogies of the "wise and farsighted policy

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of the authorities." All this is being done, what is more, entirely as in the times of the "guiding and directing force," up to and including astonishingly uniform "readers' letters"—as if written with the use of carbon paper.

Let us take the referendum on the extension of the presidential term. Preparations for it were a serious matter, especially in a country the majority of whose citizens had previously not even heard of such a "marvel." As of the day the semi-official press published the presidential edict which by force of law confirmed this unusual overseas political institution, there was not a single article which cogently and authoritatively explained to the reading public what a referendum is and why it had to be held. Nor was any polemic in this connection spotted in the newspapers. The hesitant attempts of the most "intrepid" members of the opposition to declare that cancellation of the presidential elections was a violation of the constitution were followed by a response essentially amounting to the following: The need for a referendum is obvious inasmuch as it will further the irreversible progress of political and economic transformations in the country. Is this not reminiscent of the well- known utterance of one ex-great politician: "Marx's teaching is omnipotent because it is true"?

The official press, meanwhile, had a splendid opportunity to make top news of the event that took place on 29 April (especially since there were no other in any way significant occurrences in April, it would seem). To provide politicians, lawyers, and prominent state officials from different flanks with a forum and to attempt to tally the expenditure on the organization of the referendum to demonstrate to the taxpayer the entire advantageousness of this undertaking. Nothing of the sort was done. What was, in fact, done? Nothing! Other than selections of the readers' mail in the style of the humorist Zadornov: "We drivers and painters, like all progressive drivers and painters...." And, in addition, several "analytical" articles, whose main thought may be formulated as follows: The referendum itself and the wording of the question put to the verdict of the electorate could appear somewhat dubious and could even testify to the vulnerability of the president's position, but this is not, in fact, the case inasmuch as the position of the president both within the country and outside is absolutely invulnerable. This was in fact the main argument. No attempt even to "develop" it, having demonstrated to the readers the firmness of fact and the force of logic, was made here. It was possibly for this reason that the majority of the items devoted to the upcoming referendum were either "hidden" on the inside pages or began on the front page modestly and almost imperceptibly. So perhaps not only this "line of reasoning" but the practice generally of the "mastication" of information to a condition suitable for "swallowing" by the reader should be dropped? This is what has been done in the United States for a long time now. If today this newspaper or the other aims at making strong publicity for this politician or the other or for some action that he is pursuing, it is by no means in any hurry to publish prolix and profound opuses on his pragmatism and farsightedness. It simply tracks each step of his and each public statement, bringing all this to the readers' notice with a brief comment or even without one at all.

This is what has happened (and is happening) with, for example, Newt Gingrich, speaker of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, whom many people today regard as Bill Clinton's most dangerous opponent in the presidential race. The conservative Republican Newt compelled attention with the publication of the "Contract With America"—a document which represented, in the opinion of many people in the United States, the Republican Party's most significant political achievement in recent years. For America, which is today confronted squarely with serious social problems (connected with the influx of immigrants, specifically, illegal immigrants, the growth of crime, and a certain exacerbation of racial contradictions, which had been smoothed over in past years), the question of a return to so-called traditional values—religion, family, American patriotism, and so forth—has become more topical than ever. It was on this that Gingrich gambled, and thanks to the abiding interest in his person on the part of the mass media, he is becoming an increasingly popular politician—and by no means only among Republicans.

One wonders: Did Nursultan Nazarbayev really have few "productive opening ideas," on whose "unwinding" the reader's attention could have been successfully focused on the eve of the referendum? There would then have been no need, resorting to none too perspicuous sophistry, to have tried to prove that in having made up his mind to a referendum, the head of state was not in violation of the constitution. And if he was, then it was exclusively from good intentions.

I write this by no means in order to "implant" "progressive" American experience in Kazakhstan. The United States and ourselves are two big differences, as they say in Odessa. We are as far from a genuinely influential and independent press as is a bridge across a mountain stream from the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. For we have neither as consummate legislation as American legislation, which regulates the acquisition and publication of information, nor the corresponding level of feeling for the law on the part of officials, who, as before, prefer simply to "sit" on information, releasing it, as in recent years, like sausage, strictly measured out and with the minimum quantity of "meat." It is sim-

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ply that the consumer of this "sausage" is increasingly refusing to eat it, preferring to watch on the box action movies from that same country of "victorious capitalism." If today, on meeting us Kazakhstani journalists, in homes and offices, the Americans with a polite smile hold out a world atlas, asking to be shown Kazakhstan and its capital, is this not part of the "contribution" of our "digestive" journalism? There was a good reason why at the ASSOCIATED PRESS, responding to my question as to whether they often quote local official newspapers in the news from Kazakhstan, Mr. Thomas Kent, editor of the International Department (who was a pleasant surprise with his almost flawless Russian), replied evasively: "We do when the quotation seems to us sufficiently important—very rarely." And his colleague from the British REUTERS, who came to Almaty a couple of years ago, put it even more cuttingly: "Almost nothing happens here in principle. But you do not know how to create a stir even out of the little that there is."

The referendum (the referendum as such, not its outcome) was the main political stir of April. This event essentially conclusively determined the vector of the country's development for the immediate (and, possibly, not only immediate) future. Some of our homegrown observers, political scientists, and sundry "experts" gave themselves over at this time to unrestrained flattery, some, to pinning on labels, and some, simply to verbal gymnastics in the style of "this cannot be because it never can be."

One involuntarily wonders: Perhaps it is for the better that our official press is unfree. Give it freedom tomorrow, and what, poor thing, would it do with it?

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Receives Slovak Government Delegation

LD1705202795 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 1400 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today President Akayev of Kyrgyzstan received an official government delegation from the Slovak Republic headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Sergej Kozlik.

The head of state greeted the delegation and recalled the long-standing relations between the two countries. [passage omitted] It will be good, the president said, if that tradition is revived and a group of Slovak specialists come to assist Kyrgyzstan in today's new situation. Very favorable conditions exist for successful mutual cooperation in developing economic, trade, cultural and other relations, and they can be used with maximum effect.

In response, Sergej Kozlik expressed sincere gratitude on behalf of his delegation for their heartfelt and cordial welcome in Kyrgyzstan and conveyed greetings from Slovak President Michal Kovac to President Akayev. Picking up the Kyrgyz president's idea of bringing a Slovak group of specialists to Kyrgyzstan, the head of the Slovak delegation said that his country's government is ready to make every effort to further the development of the bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation which exist under already formed traditions. [passage omitted]

Slovak Delegation Concludes Visit

LD1805082995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0723 GMT 18 May 95

[By Boris Maynayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK May 18 (Itar-Tass) — Slovakia's delegation finished its one-day official visit to Kyrgyzstan today.

The delegation, led by Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister Sergej Kozlik, has drawn an agreement on trade, economic and technological cooperation between Slovakia and Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyz and Slovak businessmen held a seminar to air their interests.

Slovakia is ready to export to Kyrgyzstan its industrial products in exchange for Kyrgyz-made agricultural machinery and handicraft products.

The Slovak delegation travelled on to Kazakhstan's capital Almaty today.

Akayev Calls for Inter-Ethnic Integration

LD1705191395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 17 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: No. 91 (835); compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov and Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Active participation of ethnic minorities in the elaboration of a national policy to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts is necessary, President Askar Akayev told an international seminar on inter-ethnic relations and regional cooperation on Wednesday [17 May]. The seminar is being held with participation of the OSCE.

In the opinion of the president, integration of all ethnic groups will help settle transitional problems in Kyrgyzstan. The essence of this integration is "the unification of all ethnoses to set national interests and goals," he stressed.

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The state head voiced the need to create and implement a system of preventive measures to escape inter-ethnic conflicts. In his words, representatives of over 80 ethnoses are living in Kyrgyzstan, ethnic Kyrgyzes amount to 57 percent of the population, ethnic Russians to 17 percent, ethnic Uzbeks to 14 percent, ethnic Ukrainians to 2 percent, ethnic Tatars to 1.3 percent and ethnic Kazakhs to 1 percent. Akayev hopes that programs to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts elaborated with the help of the OSCE will "become a model of inter-ethnic accord both for Central Asia and the whole Commonwealth."

Speaking of domestic political priorities, the President mentioned consolidation of civil peace, stability, national accord on principles of free development and respect to the rights of each ethnos, as well as "inadmissibility of infringement of interests of one ethnos for another." In the opinion of Akayev, inter-ethnic stability can be achieved with the help of a concept of national policy, programs for development of each ethnos and a legal mechanism for protection of rights of all ethnic minorities living in Kyrgyzstan.

Speaking of cooperation in the Central Asian region, the President stressed that "not a single state of the world is capable to overcome crises of the transitional period without regional cooperation." That is why, Kyrgyzstan aims to cooperate with its neighbors, primarily Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, bearing in mind this cooperation is vitally important for the solution of its economic, social and ecological problems.

In the words of Akayev, "Kyrgyzstan will actively participate in other inter-state associations that may appear in the Asian region." He stands for expanded mutually beneficial and equal cooperation with Commonwealth nations and other states of the world.

Military Accords With Russia Ratified

LD1705202895 Bishkek Kyrgyz Television in Russian 1430 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today deputies to the Legislative Assembly of the Kyrgyz Supreme Council, in accordance with the agenda, debated the bill proposed by the government on introducing a law of the Kyrgyz Republic on a minimum consumer budget. [passage omitted] It is difficult to predict the fate of this bill, but the proposed normative act was adopted as a whole by the majority of deputies.

The deputies also ratified the guarantee agreement on a draft credit line between the Kyrgyz Republic and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the treaty between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Russian Federation on military cooperation; and the agreement between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Russian Federation on the procedure for the use of Russian military facilities on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic and on the status of servicemen.

There is no need to talk about the importance of these latter documents because they are of great political, economic, military, and social significance for us. It is no secret that Russia is our main military ally and economic partner. [passage omitted]

Tajikistan

Dushanbe Radio Reports Rakhmanov Meetings in Kabul

LD1805053795 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0420 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, a delegation of representatives of the Republic of Tajikistan led by President Emomali Rakhmanov arrived in Kabul, the capital of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. Here, Emomali Rakhmanov had a meeting with President Borhanoddin Rabbani of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. They exchanged views on the expansion of relations of cooperation and on bringing the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border back to normal.

President Emomali Rakhmanov also had a meeting with Sayed Abdullo Nuri, the leader of the Tajik opposition. They exchanged views on the implementation of the cease-fire agreements, the inviolability of the border, and the repatriation of all refugees to their homes.

Opposition Reports Progress at Talks

LD1805113295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1024 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 18 (Interfax) — One of the Tajik opposition leaders, Akbar Turadzhonzoda, reports that "progress in inter-Tajik relations" was made Wednesday [17 May] at the meeting in Kabul between Tajikistan's President Emomali Rakhmanov and Chairman of Tajikistan's Islamic Revival Movement Sayed Abdullo Nuri.

In Turadzhonzoda's opinion, "the fact that the recent political antagonists have reached out to each other, displaying good will and readiness to work out compromises, inspires hope for a peaceful future in Tajikistan."

The Kabul talks between Dushanbe officials and opposition representatives will be continued.

Turadzhonzoda admitted that "no serious achievements were reached" in the course of the first round of negotiations.

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According to him, Rakhmanov and Nuri discussed ways of easing tension in the Badakhshan autonomy, bringing Tajik refugees back to their homeland, and implementing the truce both on the Tajik-Afghan border and inside Tajikistan.

Kazakh President To Meet Islamic Movement Leaders

LD1805084795 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0803 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan intends to have a private meeting with Professor Haji Akbar Turajonzoda and Professor Muhammadsharif Himmatzoda, the deputy leaders of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan.

According to the office of the council of the Coordinating Center for the Democratic Forces of Tajikistan in CIS countries, this report was passed to them by telephone by the Kazakh Foreign Ministry.

The Kazakh Foreign Ministry also said it is completely ready to hold the fourth inter-Tajik talks and, on behalf of the government of Kazakhstan, invited Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, the head of the opposition delegation, to visit Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, on 21 May.

The fourth round of inter-Tajik talks is due to take place in Almaty on 22 May.

Currency, Wage, Price Turmoil; Karimov Cited

MM1805105195 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 May 95 p 1

[Report by Alisher Niyazov: "Tajikistan: Prices Let Loose"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe — On 15 May the Tajik ruble was declared the sole legal tender in transactions between all individuals and corporate bodies, irrespective of form of ownership, throughout the country's territory. The Russian ruble has been taken out of circulation.

As for measures to protect the Tajik currency against hyperinflation and preventing it being turned into wallpaper, as malicious tongues are predicting, the government has adopted a whole number of serious measures. Apart from pensioners, students, and budget-funded organizations, all economically accountable and commercial organizations can pay wages to their workers if they have money in the bank.

It became clear from an interview given to your PRAVDA correspondent by Premier Jamshed Karimov that the republic will be given substantial support by the IMF and other international financial organizations provided that the Tajik Government follows a course of market reforms, curbs the budget deficit, and does not set the money-printing presses in motion. In the premier's words, there are also changes for the better here. The government has deregulated prices for all types of goods and products apart from bread, and prices for all types of bakery products have been increased 150 percent.

On the subject of the explosive factor of the multimillion wages arrears owed to the population, the premier, unfortunately, offered no consolation to the hundreds of thousands of his poor compatriots, noting that the payment of wages will only begin 10 May, and the remaining money will be transferred to savings accounts at an exchange rate of 1:1,200 and will be compensated in time in the form of privatization checks.

"If this is one of the factors in a 'civilized market,' what would you call daylight robbery?" was the perplexed question put to me by an acquaintance of mine, an engineer who has worked at an enterprise for 30 years and has now had his hard-earned money — seven months unpaid wages — expropriated. And this kind of question is currently being asked by thousands of the republic's inhabitants. Nobody knows how the sovereign Tajik ruble will perform. Meanwhile thousands of city dwellers are forming confused and worried crowds at the money-exchange points, of which, as was to be expected, there is an extreme dearth in Dushanbe, a city of 1 million inhabitants, and which close after a couple of hours because they run out of first the national currency and then Russian currency.

Waiting lines of thousands of pensioners have become a permanent feature outside savings banks, but here too there is not enough money for all the sufferers. But they want to get something to eat today. Despite announcements that goods and food products are on sale for national currency, there are neither goods nor food products in the state sector. Instead the private sector has jumped into the breach, exploiting this time of confusion. It will take Tajik rubles or — with greater enthusiasm — Russian rubles or dollars, while surreptitiously cranking up prices as far as it can. A 350-gram national loaf has gone up to 1,800 Russian or 18 Tajik rubles. And a kilogram of butter costs the equivalent of the monthly minimum wage.

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Turkmenistan

Slovak Delegation Signs Economic Memorandum

AU1705175695 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 16 May 95 p 1

[TASR report: "Sergej Kozlik Wants To Orientate Slovak Capacities Eastward"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ashghabat — A Slovak Government delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Sergej Kozlik was received by the President of Turkmenistan Saparmurad Niyazov in Ashghabat yesterday. During their talks, the two officials noted that the November 1994 visit to Slovakia by the highest representative of Turkmenistan had established a good foundation for the aforesaid conclusions [sentence as published]. Sergej Kozlik said after the meeting that the Slovak delegation had declared its interest in maximally orientating Slovak capacities to the East. He appreciated the accommodating attitude by the president and other representatives of Turkmenistan in preparing the implementation of these plans.

[Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 16 May on page 13, under the headline "Slovakia and Turkmenistan Signed Memorandum," carries the following TASR report: "The signing of a memorandum between the Slovak Republic and Turkmenistan was the zenith of a Slovak Government and entrepreneurs' visit to Turkmenistan. The document was signed by Sergej Kozlik, who heads the Slovak delegation, and Rejep Saparov, deputy prime minister of Turkmenistan. The memorandum specifies individual areas of bilateral economic cooperation and declares both countries' eminent interest in broadening this cooperation. A number of initiatives that emerged from talks between the two countries' entrepreneurial entities are also embedded in the memorandum."]

Niyazov Appoints Turkish Businessman Deputy Minister

TA1805110395 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 0945 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ashgabat, May 18 (A.A.) — Saparmurad Niyazov, the president of Turkmenistan, appointed Turkish businessman Ahmet Calik, who has invested great sums in the country to the textile ministry, as deputy minister, it was reported on Wednesday [17 May].

Niyazov said at a meeting with representatives of the textile industry that the factories Turks have built form the driving force of Turkmenistan's economy. "We are brothers," he said, and "Turkmenistan's riches are Turkey's riches."

Calik responded that Turkmenistan would soon shine in the world and that as a Turkish businessman, he would feel happy to have contributed to its development.

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Armenia

Power Engineering Agreement Signed With Iran

LD1705183895 Moscow ECONOMIC NEWS AGENCY in Russian 1330 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Vladimir Manoyan, press secretary of the Armenian government, an agreement on cooperation in power engineering was signed at a meeting between Armenian and Iranian delegations. Under the agreement two hydroelectric power stations will be built on the Araks river. The project has two versions, a tunnel-type power station with a capacity of 210-220 mW and a slightly more powerful dam-type version. The construction will take several years and will cost $170 million.

Also, a Megri-Kadzharan gas pipeline has been planned. It will be 140 km long, including a 40 km section passing through Iran. The pipeline will have a throughput of 1,000 million cu.m. of gas per year. Feasibility studies are to be carried out this year, and the construction is expected to take two years. After Armenia has started receiving Iranian gas it will become part of the joint Turkmenistan-Iran-Russia gas supply system.

Spokesman Favors Oil Pipeline Project

LD1705163195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1328 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, May 17 (Interfax) - Armenia will economically benefit if a pipeline to pump Azeri oil to Turkey goes via its territory, a presidential spokesman said.

Levon Zarubyan in an interview with Interfax warned against attempts to try to link the project with the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He said there were alternative routes for laying down the pipeline to pass through the country's north.

At the same time, Zarubyan admitted that if implemented, the project could serve a stabilizing factor to help resolve the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. But the interests of other countries, particularly those of Russia and Iran, will have to be accounted for as well, the spokesman said.

In the meantime, representatives of the international consortium handling the project spoke of two possible routes for the new pipeline. One is from Baku to Russia's city port of Novorossiysk via Groznyy and the other from Baku to Turkey via the Georgian city port of Batumi. The consortium is expected to decide which of them is best in the next two months.

Bagratyan Addresses Parliament on Privatization

LD1705222695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2002 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, May 17 (Interfax) — Armenian Premier Hrant Bagratyan said at a parliamentary session Wednesday [17 May] that his government intends to "continue promoting" privatization which is of "strategic importance." "Today we are laying the foundations which will define our nation in 30 to 40 years," he said.

He also said Armenia is economically ahead of other ex- Soviet republics, many of whom "are living through a period of stagnation." Armenia with its "large-scale privatization" has seen its industrial output rise 22% during the first four months of 1995 against the same period last year. "We owe this success exclusively to having given up old administrative ways and to having granted economic rights to the masses," stressed Bagratyan.

According to the premier, the 1994 privatization program "was carried out 45 percent, which is an indisputable achievement, taking into consideration objective difficulties, such as the transport blockade of the country, its military situation and energy crisis."

Bagratyan said Armenian government plans to privatize over 1,000 large and about 4,000 small companies this year.

Four Deputies Elected in Karabakh Runoff Elections

NC1705200895 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1700 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Runoff elections were held in six election districts in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] on 15 May. Twelve candidates stood for six parliamentary seats. The central Election Commission said the elections are considered to have been held in all the election districts. Some 75.7 percent of voters took part in the elections. On 17 May the Commission summed up the election results and registered the four elected deputies. The NKR's new parliament now has 28 members. The runoff voting was considered invalid in election district no. 2 in Stepanakert. New runoff elections will be held in five election districts of the Republic on 30 June.

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Defense Minister Appointed National Security Chief

LD1705185895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1632 GMT 17 May 95

[By Tigran Liloyan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, May 17 (Itar-Tass) - Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan signed a decree appointing Serzhik Sarkisyan head of the State Department of National Security, the presidential press-service reported on Wednesday [17 May].

Sarkisyan, a professional philologist and former communist party chief in Nagorno-Karabakh, headed the enclave's troops during the war with Azerbaijan.

Since 1993, he had been working in the capacity of Armenia's Defence Minister.

Former national security chief David Shakhnazaryan, has been released from his duties. However, he retained the post of presidential ambassador at large.

Reactions to ARF Member's Death Detailed

NC1705202995 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 0359 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 17/05/95 NOYAN TAPAN—On May 17, a press conference of the Supreme Council's deputy, a member of the Party ARF [Armenian Revolutionary Federation]-Dashnaktsutyun Garnik Isagulian took place at the headquarters of the Party Union of National Self-Determination - Christianocrates. A well known lawyer Ruben Sahakyan participated in the news conference.

Garnik Isagulyan confirmed the fact of ARF member Artavazd Manukyan's death, who, according to the official version, died of piles. He stated that Manukyan's death was a murder, being the fault of the Armenian President, the Prosecutor General amd SNSD [State National Security Department] investigation group, running the investigation on this case. According to Isagulyan's assertions, 40-year-old Artavazd Manukyan, father of three underage children was a healthy young man before he was arrested. He even participated in the hostilities in Karabakh. As far as the official death reasons are concerned, according to Isagulian, nobody believes in them. Surely he was tortured severely on part of the investigation.

Since Artavazd Manukyan's murder, in Isagulyan's opinion, the "case" against the Party ARF-Dashnaktsutyun no longer remains a case against only one political organization but transforms into a case against all the Armenian people. Garnik Isagulyan also reported that the body of the deceased is not transmitted to his family: "It depends on you whether the body will be transmitted to you or not",- such an answer was received by Manukyan's family members.

A renowned lawyer Ruben Sahakyan who spoke at the press-conference said that Manukian's defender Serezha Shakhverdyan has several times appealed to Prosecutor General Gevorkyan in regards of grave state of health of his client. The last of these appeals was mailed to Prosecutor General on May 13 and the lawyer insisted in his message that Artavazd Manukyan be urgently examined by forensic doctors and psychologists alike. The Prosecutor's Office every time declined the appeals. In his appeal the lawyer described the state of Manukyan's health saying that he suffered from piles, strong hemorrhage, dizziness, his blood was of an unusually light color, one could barely hear him when he spoke. According to Sahakyan, for the last 1.5 months which his client had spent in the hospital adjacent to the penitentiary, he had not received any medical assistance. Chief Doctor of the hospital prohibited interrogation of Manukyan starting May 6. The hospital was not able to provide medical aid to the prisoner, it lacked blood and blood substitutes for transfusion.

Ruben Sahakyan said that he would never believe the forensic assessment about the causes of Manukyan's death, even if it is given by an official commission. He claimed that Prosecutor Gevorkyan and Head of Investigation Department Geozalyan are criminals who have issued hundreds of illegal orders for arrests. Sahakyan is especially concerned over the fate of suspects in the murder of Hambardzum Galustyan, namely Armen Momjyan, Rudolf Hovhakimyan (for over 30 days he has been in solitary confinement), Mikayel Manukyan and Arsen Artsruni (arrested in relation to the "Dro" case). According to the lawyer, violence is being used against these people in order to get the testimony "needed".

Suspension of Russian-Language Paper Protested

MK1705125095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 May 95 p 9

[Report by Gamlet Matevosyan from Yerevan in the "Neighbors" column: "The Publication of the newspaper GOLOS ARMENII Has Been Suspended. The Council of Journalists Has Urged the Republic Prime Minister To Restore Justice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Supreme Soviet of the Armenian Republic has turned down a draft appeal to the republic government to ensure normal working conditions for the independent Russian-language newspaper GOLOS ARMENII. Opposition deputies who presented the draft proposed that the question of the newspaper

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be considered an emergency matter, but the majority of parliamentarians voted against the move.

The GOLOS ARMENII editorial board circulated a statement which alleges gross violations of the law with respect to the paper. Since January 1995 its employees have been told to vacate the premises in the Yerevan Press House, and since February electricity has been cut off on the floor where the editorial office is located. To resolve the dispute over the rented premises, GOLOS ARMENII filed a suit with an arbitration court. In response the leadership of the Periodika publishing house under the Armenia Government Business Management decided to stop publishing the paper altogether. According to the statement, this decision was made under direct pressure from the government, in particular State Minister Armenak Kazaryan and Business Management chief Sergey Manasaryan.

GOLOS ARMENII's collective has assessed the incident as a gross violation of fundamental civil rights and of the Law on the Press. The editorial staffs of the newspapers URARTU, SHRDZHAN, and IRAVUNK [all as transliterated], in a show of solidarity with their colleagues, expressed readiness to give their pages to GOLOS ARMENII stories. The Armenia Journalists Council has urged Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan to restore justice.

Azerbaijan

OSCE Military Delegation Arrives

NC1705183195 Baku TURAN in English
1729 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (MAY 16) TURAN—A military delegation of the OSCE arrived in Baku today in the afternoon. The delegation is headed by the officer Hekki Vilen. The purpose of the visit is to discuss issues concerning settlement of peacekeeping forces of the OSCE in the zone of the Armenian-Azeri conflict. The members of the delegation will are to meet with Defence Minister Sefer Abiyev and Head of Headquarter Najmeddin Sadikov today. The program of delegation provides a visit to front zone for becoming acquainted with the zone.

Defense Ministry on Armenian 'Propaganda'

NC1705181395 Baku AZERTAC in English
1648 GMT 17 May 95

["Today the Defence Ministry of Azerbaijan Republic Made Such a Statement"—AZERTAC headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On May 15, 1995 Radio 'Freedom' has broadcasted a message, delivered by foreign correspondent from the Azerbaijani city Khankendi [Stepanakert] occupied by Armenian armed forces about ostensibly Azerbaijans concentration of forces and vehicles in Barda, Agjabedi and Beylagan districts.

This statement might be attributed to just another unreliable message. But Azerbaijan do knows the methods of work of propaganda machine of Armenia. The leadership of Armenia and representatives of Armenian community of Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan Republic use once again their pet methods of brainwashing to realize their aggressive intentions.

The aggressive ideas of military-political leadership of Armenia are revealed by the fact that Armenia held military training, during of which questions of offensive character have been perfected, and also the fact that Zori Balayan, a deputy of Armenian supreme Soviet has made a statement on May 9, 1995 in Khankendi, situated in Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, that a priory task of Armenian armed forces was to occupy Khanlar and Geranboy [Shahumian] districts of Azerbaijan.

Such propaganda measures show that Armenian side prepares the public opinion for its broadscale operations on occupying new Azerbaijani territories.

The Azerbaijani Defence Ministry officially states that keeping the ceasefire conditions, it doesn't hold any actions on concentration of its forces and vehicles in the zone of military actions.

The Azerbaijani Defence Ministry notifies that in the case of torpedoing the negotiating processes on peaceful settlement of Armenian-Azerbaijanian conflict and in the case of violation of ceasefire agreement, Armenia is responsible for further extension of events.

Russian Source Views 'Contradictions' in Talks

NC1705185095 Baku TURAN in English
1204 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow (May 17) TURAN—The work over the content of the Major Political Agreement on the Armenian-Azerbaijani talks has been going on for two days. The results of two-day work show that the basic contradictions in positions of the parties are yet to be overcome, the diplomatic source from Russia's Foreign Ministry told TURAN.

Another round of the Armenian-Azerbaijani talks through the mediation of the representatives of the co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Conference, Kazimirov and Niberg, has started on May 15 in Moscow.

As the Russian diplomat says, Azerbaijan's refusal to recognise Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh the party to the talks "does not give the opportunity to come closer to discussion of the issue concerning seized territories and Nagorno-Karabakh's status".

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Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Russia, Ramiz Rizayev, says that the beginning of Moscow's talks gives hope. "The parties have started to the talks without preliminary conditions and discussion of procedure issues, that is the talks started with the issues on liberation of seized territories, refugees home-coming and ensurance of safety of the population of the region", the Ambassador told TURAN.

Rizayev said that the parties agreed not to inform the public about the course of the negotiations until its end. The mediators thinks that only this way one can avoid misrepresentation of the essence of the negotiation process in the mass media.

Last evening Russian Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, received the participants of the Armenian-Azerbaijani talks. The diplomatic sources from Moscow reported that the basic purpose of the meeting was to convince the parties to be flexible and not to break Moscow's talks. The Azeri delegation insisted on the participation of the representative of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh, Nizami Bahmanov, at the meeting with Vladimir Kazimirov.

The Armenian side stands against participation of the representatives of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh in the negotiation process. The Russian mediator understands this position of Armenians.

Envoy Says Karabakh Status Demand Unacceptable

NC1705183295 Baku TURAN in English 1727 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 16) TURAN—According to the information from Russian Foreign Ministry the negotiations on the settlement of the Armenian-Azeri conflict in Moscow are held behind the closed doors. Vladimir Muzichenko, the Assistant of Special Envoy of the Russian President Vladimir Kazimirov told that "they are looking for ways of rapprochement of the positions of the parties."

At the same time, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Russia Ramiz Rizayev told that the issues on preparation the Major Political Agreement, on the liberation of the occupied territories, deployment of peacekeeping forces into the region, the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and the return of refugees to their native places will be discussed.

The Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh demand for themselves a status equal to the status of Azerbaijan. We will never agree with that," Rizayev said.

Deputy Speaker on CIS Assembly; Party Membership Declared

NC1705201895 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Azerbaijani delegation returned home after the sixth plenary session of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly in St. Petersburg.

The deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Yashar Aliyev, held a news conference today.

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] According to the information provided on the session, the integration of the CIS countries and issues relating to improving the Assembly's role in consolidating the CIS were the focus of attention at the session, which discussed over 20 issues.

During the discussion of the first anniversary of the cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azerbaijani delegation noted that only one of the provisions of the Bishkek protocol, that is, the cease-fire, has been implemented. In Aliyev's view the first anniversary of the protocol cannot be regarded as an outstanding event, because, apart from the cease-fire, the provisions as a whole, that is, the withdrawal of the troops and the liberation of the land, the return of the refugees, and the reopening of communication routes have not been implemented.

Yashar Aliyev also noted that principled corrections were introduced to the bill on refugees at the proposal of the Azerbaijani delegation.

Rejecting a press report on the session, the deputy chairman explained that he made no statement at St. Petersburg regarding the Major Political Agreement. In general no talks or consultations were held on Nagorno-Karabakh problem at the Interparliamentary Assembly session.

Afer the news conference Yashar Aliyev declared his membership of Yeni Azerbaycan [New Azerbaijan] on the eve of the election campaign. He said he will continue defending the party's policy in his political activity. [end recording]

Discussion of Pipeline Through Georgia to Europe

NC1705184995 Baku TURAN in English 1448 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 17) TURAN—The delegation of Azerbaijan's International Operation Company led by its President Mr. Terry Adams, was in Tbilisi from May 15 to 16. The President of SOCAR [State Oil Company of Azerbaijan], Natig Aliyev, also was in Georgia with him.

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The members of the delegation met with Georgian President, Eduard Shevardnadze, and other officials. The issues concerning the transit of Azeri oil to the world market were discussed during the meeting. The details of laying of the oil pipeline from Azerbaijan to Europe through Georgia have been discussed as well.

On May 16 in his interview to Georgian TV, Mr. Terry Adams mentioned that only the economic factors will be taken into account during adoption of the resolution on the oil pipeline route. He said that there are only two basic routes: through Russia (North Caucasus) and through Georgia.

President Eduard Shevardnadze said that Georgia welcomes the possibility of laying of the oil pipeline through Georgia and mentioned that the scheduled visit of President Aliyev to Georgia will be the basis of the new stage of relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia.

On May 16 at the press-conference in Tbilisi, Georgian Vice- Premier, Zurab Kervalishvili, said that the extraction of the so-called "early" oil from the Azeri oil-field Chirag must start in 1996. Every year it is necessary to export approximately 5 million tons of oil. And first of all Georgia must be ready to that, Kervalishvili said. The joint Georgian-Azerbaijani Commission will be created. It will study Georgia's possibilities to ship the oil. In the near future the resolution on this issue must be adopted and that is why the Commission will have to work with high speed. He said that Georgia gives absolute guarantee for safe shipment of oil through its territory.

The financial issues are yet to be discussed, Vice-premier said.

Georgia

Deputy Foreign Minister, German Envoy Meet

LD1705200195 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1700 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On 17 May Deputy Foreign Minister Mikheil Ukleba received Norbert Baas, German ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Georgia. [passage omitted] The ambassador confirmed Germany's firm support of Georgia's territorial integrity. The two officials discussed the economic cooperation between Georgia and Germany and noted that it was necessary to create a legal basis for further cooperation between Germany and Georgia. They also discussed a visit to Georgia by Carl-Dieter Sprager, federal minister for economic cooperation and development of Germany, due to take place 21-24 May.

Chance of Georgian-Abkhazian Compromise Assessed

MM1805092595 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 May 95 p 1

[Article by Igor Lenskiy: "Haggling Over Abkhazia"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A compromise is possible in the protracted political conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia: The prospect of this has finally emerged during dialogue between the sides in Moscow. Georgian-Abkhazian consultations are taking place in a confidential atmosphere on Old Square through the mediation of Russian Vice Premier Aleksey Bolshakov. [passage omitted]

Fundamental differences between Abkhazia and Georgia persist in three main areas. Who enters into treaty relations — two equal components or the center and a region? What legal act regulates relations between the sides — a constitutional treaty or the Constitution of Georgia? Who signs the fundamental documents? The Abkhazians are convinced that the presidents of the two states should do this, the Georgians insist on vague descriptions — "for the Abkhazian side," "for the Georgian side."

Given that Sukhum has already made substantial concessions, it is now Tbilisi's turn to show sense. In that event, Georgian refugees will be able to return as equal citizens, however, no one will be allowed into Abkhazia with "their own structures of power."

Federation with Georgia is not, of course, the best solution for Abkhazia, the multinational people of which firmly support reunification with Russia. However, the republic is now faced with a choice not between better or worse but between existence and nonexistence. The sealing off of the border along the Psou River by Russia on the pretext of the events in Chechnya has now been tightened up and is being used as a cynical means of applying pressure on the victors. The plan is to ruin the tourist season and inflict deprivations and hunger, leading to internal disturbances in Abkhazia: "Sign the treaty with Georgia and we will open the border." But is this really the stance for a mediator-cum-peacemaker to adopt? And where are Russia's national interests here?

Unfortunately, some people have short memories and have already forgotten who attacked whom on 14 August 1992. You can't rewrite history: On that day Georgian tanks rolled into Sukhum, and the genocide of the Abkhazian people was the aim of the war. If that fundamental fact is recognized, many questions are automatically answered.

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Pro-Georgian Abkhaz Government To Seek Help

LD1705120995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0914 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, May 17 (Interfax) — Abkhazia's pro-Georgian parliament and government operating in Tbilisi intend to ask the Georgian leaders "to use the entire military potential for the restoration of the rights of hundreds of thousands of Abkhazian refugees."

This will be done if the mass return of the refugees does not begin before May 25, member of Abkhazia's pro-Georgian parliament and head of the Gali regional administration Vakhtang Kolbaya told Interfax.

Communist Party Head Views Prospects, Policies

AU1705114695 Tbilisi KOMUNISTI in Georgian 4 May 95 p 2

[Interview with General Panteleimon Giorgadze, chairman of the United Communist Party of Georgia, by Aleko Aslanishvili; place and date not given: "A Specter Is Haunting Georgia"; first published in SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA on 29 April; italicized passages are SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA editorial comment]

[FBIS Translated Text] *When Marx and Engels published the Communist Party Manifesto 130 years ago, the specter of communism was not haunting Europe but only their consciousness. However, the apparition became reality (it is a different matter what this "specter" turned into in Europe and the whole world). Today, a successful prediction can also be made but on a smaller scale: The specter of communism is haunting Georgia (if we are more realistic, it is better to say that it is not simply haunting but rather striding forward).*

When, on 26 August 1991, the Georgian Supreme Court banned the activities of the Communist Party on the territory of the republic and declared its property nationalized and when the bonfires of party membership cards were blazing in the square in front of the government building in the descending twilight, many believed that the sun of communism had set forever in Iberia's firmament.

This was not the case.

Four to five years of frost have proved sufficient. The specter has stepped out of oblivion and has reminded citizens numb with cold and emaciated through hunger that, under communism, there had been heating and food and not so many robbers had run amok. It is said that either one speaks well of the dead or says nothing. So, deceased socialism appears to the despairing population only as an appealing silhouette.

It turned out that those bonfires did not consume so many party cards... and, although the Supreme Court's decision of 26 August 1991 has not yet been officially revoked, the Communist Party, as they say, is alive and well. Not just one, but two: the United Communist Party of Georgia [UCPG] and the Georgian Communist Party along with their newspapers KOMUNISTI and KOMUNISTURI PARTIA....

The UCPG, according to its leadership, has more than 100,000 members (for your information: In 1989, the Communist Party had 415,000 registered members). More than 1,000 primary party organizations have been created according to places of residence (for example, primary organizations are functioning in 30 villages in Gori rayon). At the moment, the old Soviet Union Communist Party cards are still valid. However, it seems that they have acquired up to 2,000 new members who will soon receive a new type of party card.

The history of the UCPG dates from 25 June 1994 when the united congress of the Union of Communists, the Communist Workers' Party (a part of it), and the "Stalin" political organization was held. These organizations had until then existed separately.

A specter is haunting Georgia, the specter of communism....

[Giorgadze] The Communists will definitely return to power. On average, 35 percent of the republic's population support the Communists, but there are rayons where we have 80-95 percent support: in Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda, Akhaltsikhe, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Samtredia, Lagodekhi, Gori.... The current regime is objectively helping the Marxists: What exists today is not capitalism but a kind of primitive and savage capitalism, something terrible that is bringing destruction. Developed and civilized capitalism will not be able to become established either in Georgia or in the former Soviet republics for a very long time to come. The bourgeois reforms that they want to implement cannot work and will not be able to work for a long time. How many people have already seen what socialism is; people have socialism implanted in their minds and it cannot be erased so easily from their memory. The good that socialism brought cannot be blotted out: A person was protected, he was not alone, and the state system cared for him; a person had a guaranteed job, free education and health care, an apartment for which he paid almost nothing.... The most important thing was that people were equal. So, no matter how much socialism is cursed, it will not be so easy to remove it from people's consciousness. The socialist idea is immortal. It has to be brought back and, what's more, it will return!

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[Aslanishvili] Do you think it is possible to restore what used to be? Such things do not happen. They say that you cannot go into the same river twice.

[Giorgadze] We cannot fully restore what used to exist. This is impossible and will not work. This is not necessary and, what's more, we are not trying to do this. Our aim is to free ourselves of mistakes and to adapt socialism to the new situation.

[Aslanishvili] But aren't you still clinging to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism?

[Giorgadze] We aren't clinging to them. Simply, the ideas of Marxism-Leninism are so life-giving that they cannot be rejected.

[Aslanishvili] Is it possible that the Stalin model of socialism can be attractive for anyone today given the terrible repressions and anarchy?

[Giorgadze] Stalin was building socialism in an emergency situation through emergency rule. As a result, there were distortions. However, at the same time, Stalin raised the idea of socialism itself to a new summit....

[Aslanishvili] Let us say that you will win the elections. What start will you make? What do you intend to do in conditions of general destruction?

[Giorgadze] We will start by establishing order, the strictest order, so that each citizen will feel that he is being protected by the state.

[Aslanishvili] Through the same bloodshed and dictatorship of the administrative bodies?

[Giorgadze] Through the dictatorship of the law!

[Aslanishvili] The current authorities are dreaming about the necessity of the dictatorship of the law....

[Giorgadze] Just dreaming will not help. A mechanism for imposing the dictatorship of the law has to be elaborated.

[Aslanishvili] Have you already elaborated this mechanism?

[Giorgadze] It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. The Communists had this mechanism. Hence, there was order. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service, the Army, and the court and Procurator's Office represent both a shield and a sword. It depends who will use this weapon and how.

The first task is to disarm all citizens. Only the Army, the police, and Security Service employees can carry weapons when they are directly carrying out their official duties. The law on weapons needs to be abolished. It has brought us misfortune. For example, let us take the Rescue Corps ["Mkhedrioni" paramilitary organization]. We used to have a civil defense system that trained drivers and medical orderlies and taught the population how to act in conditions of war. It had only one civil regiment that was equipped with submachine guns, radiological decontaminators [dezaktivatorebi], anti-chemical gear, and special hardware and resources. There were no armed detachments who engaged in combat or blocked roads nor could there have been. Then, the Mkhedrioni was made part of this system and called the Rescue Corps without any qualifications, training, attestation, and professionalism. This is not right. It is unfortunate that neither a single officer from the old original Rescue Corps nor any of its property has remained in this Rescue Corps. Our demand is: Strict accountability and universal moral censure for the failure to implement a matter with which one has been entrusted and professionalism everywhere and in everything.

Furthermore, not a single party should have armed detachments or groups. We will see to this. Parties should act strictly within the law. Only those political organizations that have supporters and sympathizers in at least one-half of the republic's rayons and also, without fail, in the autonomous regions will be viewed as parties. We will establish the strictest national control: The entire national wealth is being removed from Georgia without any kind of authorization. The customs and power structures need to be purged. This then is what we intend to do if we return to power.

[Aslanishvili] Batono [Georgian polite form of address] Panteleimon, you have already said several times: "We will take strict, the strictest measures." You are at the moment only making preparations for your return and are already promising us so many severe measures. Do you think the people will support you?

[Giorgadze] Yes, they will! People have had enough of anarchy and fear. Incidentally, mankind needs the state and its attributes to protect strict order. Otherwise, the existence of the state makes no sense.

[Aslanishvili] Let's look at the other side of the question. What destroyed the communist system? It was probably more hatred of Communists rather than the national movement. The national movement went as far as Psou, and triumphed precisely on account of this hatred. Do you deny this?

[Giorgadze] What destroyed Soviet Georgia and the USSR is a separate topic for discussion. However, let us not forget that, in 1990, in conditions when the national movement was at its peak, the Communists got 60 members into the new Parliament....

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[Aslanishvili] In essence, this does not change the situation. At that time, the USSR and the CPSU still existed according to their powerful resources. This also has to be taken into account....

[Giorgadze] Yes, but now neither exists. People are nostalgic for the order and justice of the communist period. They have realized that socialism and communism cannot be discarded so casually. They have already experienced the bitter result of the "freedom" that they have acquired.

[Aslanishvili] We have the following paradox: Hatred of Communists led to the collapse of communist society, while the desperation of a hungry, unprotected, and impoverished people will bring back the Communists. Not socialist ideals (people know very well the bitter taste of these ideals) but the desire for a firm hand! However, this desire is temporary while the country remains in disorder. I can predict the following: The Communists may indeed achieve a certain degree of success in the elections this year, but you will be finally defeated in the subsequent elections because this will be in accordance with the logic of history.

[Giorgadze] The logic of history promises us something else. It signifies the victory of socialism. It is not we who forecast this but the logic of the development of society. Incidentally, people also remember the sweetness of the socialist ideals.

[Aslanishvili] Until my or your predictions come true, let us return to the present moment in time. You are promising us that, in the event of your victory, you will create strong power and implement strict measures to restore the country. Appeals and the desire for this to happen are not enough by themselves; we are not lacking such appeals and desires even today. What economic basis will you establish?

[Giorgadze] We will restore cooperative and state farms everywhere in the countryside and where this is demanded by the people. The state will promote these in every way possible. In cities, enterprises privatized by labor collectives will be left alone for the moment; what will happen to them later, life will show us. However, we will restore justice where hidden privatization has taken place and swindlers have seized property. As regards the appropriation of any state property, we will make them return everything to the last bolt. Large industrial enterprises and village farms will remain in state hands, but small and medium-size installations can become the property of groups and cooperatives though the state will exercise control over them so that there is no exploitation of people. We will not restrict personal initiative and private ownership. People can have ships and aircraft provided they have been acquired through individual labor and skill in accordance with the law. We will restore all ties that have been severed with former Union republics.

[Aslanishvili] Will Marxism-Leninism continue to remain the ideology of the state?

[Giorgadze] Marxism-Leninism will remain the ideology of the party's members and not of the state. State ideology will be built on universal human values. According to research carried out by western scientists, the 21st century will be the century of social justice; justice and unity will become established as the highest values in the world. We will be guided by this. The Communist Party will no longer fulfill economic functions. There will exist other parties, probably two to four.

[Aslanishvili] As far as I know, the UCPG supports the restoration of the Soviet Union. Isn't this a betrayal of national interests and the independence of the motherland?

[Giorgadze] Our party supports the restoration of ties with the Soviet peoples on a new basis. There exists today the western European union, or EU. There is a fundamental difference between this union and the USSR. Frontiers (customs and so forth) between EU states have, to all intents and purposes, already been erased. They have extremely close economic relations. They will soon have a single currency. All EU member states have their own bodies of power and there is the common European Parliament; they have their own armed forces and there is NATO that unites them. For example, Georgia concludes a treaty with France and the EU, but you try telling France that it is not independent! Why are we afraid of such a union? We hear people saying that we will lose our independence! If Germany and France are not losing their freedom in the EU, why should we lose ours! Anyway, what kind of independence do we have today? There are signs in English everywhere, the shops are full of Turkish and Iranian goods, we use Russian money, and the coal in Tqibuli is controlled by a group of citizens who mine it themselves and sell it abroad while people here are freezing. Is this independence?

[Aslanishvili] How do you view the settlement of the Abkhazian and Samachablo [South Ossetia] problem?

[Giorgadze] This matter is clear: Both Abkhazia and Samachablo are indivisible parts of Georgia. As soon as the restoration of the union of peoples begins, the first steps to settle this problem will be taken and ethnic conflicts will die out. There is also another way: Implementing a complex of universally recognized special measures aimed at exerting an influence on

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extremism and separatism with the help of reliable allies. We, Communists, favor the first method.

[Aslanishvili] They say (it has been written in the press) that you are financed by the Russian Communist Party....

[Giorgadze] We would gratefully receive material assistance from Russian, French, Italian, or Chinese Communists, but, unfortunately, nobody is giving us anything. We are poor. We've begun collecting membership fees for a couple of months now. However, many are paying a symbolic amount as they are in need. Some donations are also coming in and, therefore, nobody receives a wage in the party apparatus. Many parties in this country have auxiliary economic structures and sponsors, including those abroad. We are not accusing or criticizing them in any way. However, it is deplorable that they are spreading gossip about us.

[Aslanishvili] Finally, what relations exist between UCPG Chairman Gen. Panteleimon Giorgadze and Gen. Igor Giorgadze, head of the Georgian Security Service?

[Giorgadze] As father and son, we support one another fully. There is democracy in our family: Everyone is free to hold his own views and to do his own thing on one condition — that this is for the good of Georgia.

[Aslanishvili] This is understandable, but they say that the head of the Security Service takes particular care about the UCPG, helps it in every way possible, and, to all intents and purposes, it exists on this help....

[Giorgadze] This is a lie and yet more slander. The head of the Security Service is obliged to ensure that all lawful parties have complete freedom of action provided the latter do not create a danger to the Georgian state. In this respect, the UCPG is one of these parties. We neither agree nor disagree on this score. The parties in Parliament have certain contacts with him in his capacity as the head of an official service. We, however, being a party that is not represented in Parliament, do not have such contacts. Why do my opponents slander me for being Igor's father? I have done no less than others for Georgia and, in spite of my age, I am still trying to do much both as a citizen and a Communist. Therefore, I pay less attention to such slander and gossip, although I am naturally offended. However, is there anyone left in Georgia who has not been exposed to public scorn?!

The Communists are looking forward to the elections with hope. You cannot say that they have forgotten or learnt anything. As you have become convinced during the course of this conversation, they are adapting in a fairly flexible way to the current situation.

A specter is haunting Europe, the specter of communism....

(SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA, 29 April 1995)

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Estonia

Riigikogu Amends 1995 Budget, Increases Reserves

LD1705185695 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1600 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Riigikogu amended the law on this year's state budget at its third reading today. Major amendments affected the government's reserves. Fifty-nine Riigikogu members voted in favor of the amendments, and 14 were against. According to Finance Minister Mart Opmann, it was necessary to augment the government's reserves because the previous government spent 60 percent of the reserves at the beginning of the year. The Riigikogu restored the reserves at the expense of the housing fund. Olev Raju, chairman of the Finance Commission, justified the decision by saying that by the end of the year pensions will be increased and allowances paid out by the housing fund will decrease.

Parliament Ratifies Ukraine Investments Agreement

LD1805114595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1024 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, May 18 (Interfax) — On Wednesday evening Estonian parliament ratified an Estonian-Ukrainian agreement on mutual protection of investments and on most-favored nation regime in the sphere of investments.

The document was signed on February 15 by Estonia's and Ukraine's prime ministers Andres Tarand and Aleksandr Mosol. Ukraine is the first state of the former USSR republics with which Estonia has concluded such an agreement, which meets European standards.

Up until now Ukraine had invested about 30 million kroons in the Estonian economy (8 kroons = DM 1) while Estonia's investments in Ukraine were 10 times less. The countries concluded nine agreements including an agreement on friendship and cooperation and on trade-economic cooperation.

A delegation of Ukraine's experts is visiting Tallinn at the moment and is participating in preparing a free trade agreement. Its signing is to take place when Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma visits Estonia on May 24-25.

Latvia

President Views Official Visit to Portugal

LD1705211695 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2000 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] This evening President Guntis Ulmanis and the Latvian delegation returned to Riga from a visit to Portugal. Guntis Ulmanis told journalists that Portugal will definitely support Latvia's efforts to integrate into the European Union, as well as Latvia's incorporation into the NATO security system.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] We did not sign agreements, but a lot was done so that the agreements will be signed in the near future. They had not been practically prepared by the Portuguese side, and perhaps that was a result of our incomplete work beforehand, because I suppose we hadn't ever seriously met the Portuguese Government, parliament, or president for lengthy talks to sort out viewpoints, attitudes, and convictions. I think the main thing this time is a convergence of understanding between the Mediterranean region and the Baltic region on economic and political questions, understanding in relation to the European Union, the Western European Union, and understanding about defense concepts. Yesterday after our talks, 26 of the 150 parliamentary deputies signed an agreement on the formation of a support group among Portuguese parliamentary deputies for the Baltic countries and Latvia, and that was perhaps the result of the questions on the first day, when they asked me such questions — serious politicians — as, do you still speak only Russian in Latvia, or are you allowed to speak Latvian? [laughs]

And so we were laughing too, and in the end we were all laughing together. Perhaps another viewpoint they had was with a bit of humor and (?thoroughly) critical attitude, when one of the leading Portuguese politicians said, well, until your visit we didn't think especially seriously about the independence of the Baltic countries and future prospects, but now we understand it must be taken as a serious factor in our foreign policy and all our other concepts; a factor the whole world must reckon with as well. [end recording]

[Announcer] During the visit it was also intended to sign an agreement on the non-imposition of dual taxation and mutual protection of investment, but for technical reasons they were not signed.

President Praises Decision To Take Over Bank

WS1805114795 Tallinn BNS in English 1000 GMT 18 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, May 18, BNS — Latvian Government's decision in regard to Banka Baltija can be evaluated as determination to protect interests of state residents and not to allow cheating of them, Latvian State President said Wednesday at a press conference upon returning from his visit to Portugal.

"It gives us hope that the situation in banks could improve and become stable," said Ulmanis.

The Latvian President has also deposited money in the Banka Baltija and he does not plan to withdraw it

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from the bank or make agiotage [as received] around the issue. Ulmanis is convinced that the situation will become stable and he will get back all the deposited money as well as interest.

Baltic Justice Ministers Sign Cooperation Pact

LD1705142495 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1200 GMT 17 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The ministers of justice of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia today signed an agreement on mutual cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of the three Baltic states. The agreement provides for cooperation in the spheres of legislation, the work of the courts, and the exchange of legal information — particularly stressing coordination of legislative acts. It is planned to organize talks and consultations at the level of ministers of justice or their authorized representatives to discuss the most topical issues of cooperation.

After the signing of the agreement, Latvian Justice Minister Romans Apsitis noted that there has not been enough information so far on the situation in legislative matters in our neighbor states. Therefore, future cooperation will begin with an exchange of information. He also stressed that legislative acts would be coordinated so that each country would not lose its legal sovereignty.

The agreement was signed for five years, but in March of every year the Ministry of Justice of the country presiding over the Baltic Council of Ministers will organize a meeting, which will assess the work during the past year and adopt a plan of work for the next year.

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